

THE
YOUNG CONVERTS;
OR
MEMOIRS OF THE THREE SISTERS,

DEBBIE, HELEN AND ANNA BARLOW.

COMPILED BY

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EDITED BY

Very Rev. Z. Druon, of St. Albans, Vt.

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Don't forget
to
JAGTHON

Preface to the Second Edition.

It is now nearly six years since I compiled, and offered to the young Catholics of the Diocese of Burlington, these Memoirs of the three sisters. I thought they would possess an interest for the people of Northern Vermont, to whom the name of BARLOW is familiar, and identified with much of the early history of their locality. I supposed that this interest would be chiefly a local one: certainly nothing was farther from my thoughts, than the supposition that another edition of the little book would be called for. I was, therefore, surprised to hear of the wide circulation it soon attained, not only in the Western wilds of our own country—as well as in the older portions—but also abroad, and that the whole edition was exhausted, while there was still a demand for it.

These circumstances, together with the discovery of additional matter, which it is thought may increase the interest of the Memoirs, have induced me to yield to urgent and friendly solicitations, and prepare the second edition now offered to the public.

To convince such readers as have doubted the real existence of our lamented young friends, and pronounced the whole narrative a fiction—even while reading it, as they confess, with lively emotion—the original manuscript letters can be produced. These are given precisely as they were written, with the exception of slight verbal corrections or omissions, fewer in number than would seem possible in a series of familiar letters written by young persons, and, of course, without a thought of their future publication.

It is not surprising to us, who knew these lovely sisters well, that their memorial, imperfectly as it is traced herein, should appear to strangers like a fancy sketch; for, even now, when we recall their images, and dwell with fond delight upon all the circumstances of their brief sojourn among us—many of the most interesting of which it is impossible to embody in a work like this—they seem more like beautiful creations of a poet's fancy, than creatures of smiles and tears, subject to joys and sorrows, to suffering and to death, in common with frail humanity. To the best of my ability I have given their simple record, and whether it shall be accepted as truth or not,

“It shall be my pride,

“That I have dared to tread this holy ground,

“Speaking no dream, but things oracular.”

COMPILER.

Swanton, January, 1866.

Preface to the First Edition.

TO THE YOUNG CATHOLICS OF THE DIOCESE OF
BURLINGTON, VT.:

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:

Soon after the death of Debbie Barlow in April, I received a letter from our venerated Bishop, requesting me to prepare and present to your perusal a little sketch of the edifying lives of the three sisters, of whom she was the oldest. I could not hesitate to comply, though I distrusted my own ability to perform what was required in a satisfactory manner. Feeling at once the need of more material than I could have access to here, I went to the Convent in Montreal, where I found it in greater abundance than I could have expected. The recollections of my sojourn at the delightful boarding-school retreat of the Congregation de Notre Dame at Villa Maria, (formerly Monklands,) on Montreal Mountain—of the polite hospitality with which I was entertained—of my enjoyment in the society of the pious and intelligent sisters, and participation in the religious privileges

of that favored abode, will be gratefully cherished while I live. By the aid of the copious subject-matter there obtained—her letters written to her parents at various intervals, when she was absent from home, and those with which I have been furnished from other sources—my task has been a light one in comparison with what I expected: the compilation and arrangement of them having formed the chief part of the labor. I hope they may prove as interesting and edifying to you in the perusal as they have been to me in the preparation; and humbly recommending myself to your prayers, I remain your devoted friend,

THE COMPILER.

Burlington, June 11, 1860.

INTRODUCTION.

SOME time in the early part of February, 1853, a lady was passing the day with her young and invalid daughter, in the village of St. Albans, Vermont; and awaiting, in the parlor of a hotel, the arrival of some friends—whom they were expecting—in the cars from the South. Soon after they entered the parlor, two young girls, apparently but slightly separated as to age, (the younger one being a little the taller of the two,) entered also, having evidently but just arrived after a drive of considerable length in the cold morning air. Their interesting appearance and engaging manners attracted the attention of the mother and daughter, and led them into conjectures as to who they could be, which were soon solved by the entrance of their well-known father, who immediately introduced the beautiful young strangers as his oldest daughters, Debbie and Helen Barlow, then of Fairfield, a village about eight miles to the East of St. Albans. He was on his way with them to Montreal, where he designed to place them in the boarding-school of the ladies of the Congregation of Notre Dame, for their education.

As the young invalid to whom I have alluded had been a pupil in a convent, they were much interested to learn from her all they could of the general rules and routine, both as to studies and recreation in such institutions, and the elder one especially, addressed inquiries to her in relation to those matters, that evinced a degree of intelligence, forethought and prudence, very remarkable in one so young. Her replies were far from encouraging, for she knew by experience that the firm, though perfectly mild restraints which constantly encompass the convent pupil under all circumstances, are extremely irksome at first, even to Catholics who are subjected to them after having been accustomed to the freedom from discipline in which our young people are generally indulged at home, and in our schools, whether to their advantage or disadvantage,

the consequences thereof must testify. She closed her remarks, however, by assuring them that, though they would shrink from the system in the beginning, and probably be quite homesick for the first few weeks, yet they would form so strong an attachment to it, if they remained long enough to become habituated to its silent influence, as to feel more painfully still, upon their return home, their release from the gentle and salutary enthrallment, than they did the first exercise of its restraining, directing and controlling power. They have often assured me since, that these remarks were useful in preparing them for a life so new, and proved true in every respect; only that they were less annoyed by their subjection to its discipline, and recognized more immediately its wholesome effect than they had expected.

The lady, who met the sisters at the hotel when they were departing for Montreal, did not see them again until the winter after their return. She had heard, however, a rumor to which she gave little heed, that they had been removed from the convent in consequence of an apprehension on the part of their parents, that the Catholic religion was making such favorable impressions on their young minds and hearts, as to endanger their Protestantism. During the winter succeeding their removal, and the death of her daughter, she passed some time at St. Albans, where she received occasional visits from Debbie Barlow, who was in the habit of making excursions from Fairfield to St. Albans frequently. In the course of these visits she discovered that the reports touching the interest cherished by her lovely young friend, in the Catholic religion were true. Knowing the bitter trials that must beset the path of the young pilgrim in that direction, better than she did the strength of a character fortified with every quality necessary to secure the victory in such a conflict, she maintained a prayerful reserve on the subject, under the full assurance, that if the work was from God it would be perfected in His own good time and way. This reserve, while it really grieved the sensitive and affectionate nature of the beloved child, drew from her sallies of playful wit upon some occasions, and serious remonstrances upon others, that revealed not only the brilliancy of her genius, but the depth and earnestness of her reasoning and convictions.

The character of Debbie Barlow was indeed one of rare strength and excellence. Endowed with an intuitive sense of the good and the beautiful, she was quick to appreciate, as she was eager to seek them in every subject which was presented to her notice, (however much popular prejudice might have sought to distort it,) and equally able to discern their opposites, under whatever disguises they might appear. Her very childhood surprised us with the calm decisions and thoughtful estimates of an intellect so thoroughly well balanced as to be free from apathy on the one hand, and enthusiasm on the other; an exemption rarely enjoyed by women, even at maturity. It was her freedom from any tendency to these extremes which secured her from being jostled by the sharp collisions that she constantly encountered with worldly maxims and petty vanities, and enabled her to exercise such a powerful influence over the minds of her younger sisters, as to entitle her to the preëminence accorded her in these memoirs.

In the mode which I have chosen for the introduction of my subject, I am well aware that I have departed from the course usual to biography. It may be thought that I have presented it too abruptly, with too little formality. It was, perhaps, to be expected that I should enter with my young friend into the home of her childhood, and represent to my readers the brilliant prospects which opened before her, as she stood in all the freshness of youth and beauty, and in the plenitude of her talents and accomplishments, upon the threshold of life—the pride of her fond and indulgent parents—surrounded by the advantages of wealth and intimate connection with many distinguished families of Vermont and New York, and beset with allurements which would have enticed a heart less pure, and aspirations less simple, to a lasting union with the vanities of time and sense. It is indeed proper that I should here allude to these circumstances, in order to give due credit to the discrimination and firmness with which she weighed them all in the balance against Eternity; and, having so proved their emptiness, launched her frail bark courageously upon a stormy flood, to encounter buffetings from the wild billows of opposition and contempt, and to struggle against their power, until the peaceful haven, towards which all her desires and efforts were directed, should be securely attained. With the history

of these struggles, from the moment when the first gentle influences of Divine grace settled down into her fervent soul, and the first faint rays of Truth dawned upon her clear intellect, until their glorious and triumphant close, the heart of every Catholic, whether old or young, must be deeply interested.

The design of elucidating these, for the edification and instruction of my dear young Catholic friends, animates my heart, and inspires me with courage lovingly to undertake this labor, even while shrinking from it, depressed with the consciousness of my own incompetence to do justice to my exalted sense of the beauty and merit of my subject. Indeed I should hardly have dared the attempt, had it not happened that the lady who was her dearest friend and teacher at the convent, and with whom she corresponded at irregular intervals from the time she left the boarding-school, had, contrary to the usual practice of the religious orders, carefully preserved most of her letters and fragments of her writings while at school, which fell in her way, convinced that they were the productions of a remarkable mind and heart. These she very kindly offered to my inspection, that I might extract from their contents whatever I found that could aid me in the fulfilment of my undertaking, in the object of which she—in common with the whole devoted community to which she belongs—entertains the deepest interest. She also promised to furnish me with any information in her power, which might serve to supply missing links in the chain of our little history.

By availing myself of her offer, and important assistance, also, (during a recent visit to Montreal,) in selecting, arranging and copying these copious extracts, I hope to enable our lamented young friend—though her fair form reposes in the Halls of Silence, and we shall listen no more on earth to the tones of a voice whose utterances were as music to our ears—to discourse with us yet, eloquently and impressively, through the sentiments and the events which her own pen recorded, in her artless and admirable manner, thus :

“ Depositing upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.

The Young Convents.

CHAPTER I.

ON the ninth day of February, 1853, Debbie Barlow first entered the Convent of the Congregation of Notre Dame, as a pupil in that excellent institution. She was then fifteen years of age, and her sister Helen, who accompanied her, was about thirteen. As the history of the first impressions upon her mind, as well as their subsequent development, will interest and edify my young readers, I must claim their attention and indulgence, if I enter more minutely into its details than would, at the first glance, seem necessary. When they passed through the large gate which opens from Notre Dame Street into the enclosure of the Institution, "the Convent walls," to use her own expression, "looked so gray, so dark, so dismal!" that the sight of them made her heart sink with dread, and she entered beneath their shadow with such shrinking reluctance that, according to her own account of it, nothing could have sustained her under the parting with her father, but the conviction that it was her duty to make this sacrifice of her feelings to please him, after he had so kindly exerted himself to secure its valuable advantages for her education. When she had been there two days, she wrote the following letter to her mother:

MY DEAR MOTHER—Here I am seated in a *convent*, (will you laugh at the idea?) writing to you. Despite my aversion to the Roman Catholic religion,

and the various prayers we are obliged to attend upon, I am very contented. To be sure I feel the same as regards the doctrines of this Church as I always have, and my dislike to worship as they do is the same as when I was at home; but outward forms will not change the heart; it is mockery for me to bow to the image of the Virgin Mary; and even if I did that, it would be only because I was compelled to do so, and if the nuns know it they will certainly not oblige me to do it. I cannot turn my eyes in any direction without beholding some statue or painting. The prayers are mostly in French, and I do not understand them at all. The hymns are sung to the Mother of God, and indeed it seems to me that they put their whole trust in her, but I suppose they do not. However, my belief is, that we are commanded to worship one God only. But no more of this. The nuns are very kind, and no one can help loving them. The wishes of their pupils are all granted, as far, at least, as would be best for their interests. I will close here, for I cannot write all the particulars concerning the school: I will in my next. No one sees our letters except one of the nuns. Helen is perfectly contented, and sends love, etc."

A fortnight later, she wrote to her mother under date of March 1st:

" I presume you have heard from father all about our journey from home here; so, I will leave that and continue. We entered the convent on Wednesday—were received very kindly by the nuns whom you have no idea of at all: they are very pleasant, and seem to be very happy. There are many that I should think are quite young and accomplished; and, we should think, if we had them in the world, great additions to society. They are devoted to their religion, beyond my power to express. They introduced us to some of the young ladies, who seemed very amiable, and who did their best to show us the various rooms, and inform us of the rules and requirements of the school: at evening the whole school assembled

in the recreation room, which is large, and divided into two parts, one for the smaller children, and the other for the older girls. You may imagine the noise we made, for there were no less than one hundred and forty of us. There was a nun in each room to oversee the plays, and who seemed to enjoy it as well as we did ourselves. We did almost any thing we wished. Some were seated in groups, talking on all subjects; others were promenading up and down the rooms—some were standing around the nun's chair (which was raised some height from the floor,) talking with her, and others were singing and dancing, jumping the rope, etc. Soon the folding doors opened, and the younger children came marching through, headed by one they had chosen for their leader, and who seemed to be the head one in all their plays.—They were singing a march, and you may be sure they looked very pretty. At the command of their leader, (who was a noble looking child,) they marched round the rooms several times, and then returned—there were at least fifty of them. We spent the evening very pleasantly, and at eight o'clock the bell rung for us to go to prayers. We went to the chapel, which is very pretty indeed; it is adjoining the dining-room, and I should think it was purposely for evening or private devotions;* the altar is small, but beautiful; it is gilded and decorated with statues, crucifix and silver candlesticks, with wax tapers, etc., etc. The walls are also hung with very beautiful paintings of our Lord, the Virgin Mary and various Saints. After prayers, and an evening hymn to the Virgin, we retired for the night. Helen and myself have a room together, with separate beds.

"At six in the morning we rise and proceed to the chapel to hear Mass. It is under the same roof with the convent, but not the one we go to for evening prayers; it is much larger, and has three altars. The paintings there are some of them very large and beautiful, and they have also a very fine organ, which

* It is the young ladies' chapel.—*Comp.*

is played by one of the nuns. After Mass we go to breakfast, and then to study until eleven; then catechism until twelve—dinner and recreation until one, and study until three; recreation from three to four, then study, and a lecture until six; then tea and recreation until eight. We enjoy ourselves now as we did when we first came; indeed, every day I enjoy myself more and more.

"I will now tell you what studies I am pursuing. Monday I have French and Arithmetic; Tuesday, Rhetoric, Philosophy and Dictionary; Wednesday, French and Arithmetic. Thursday we do not study, but mend our clothes and embroider. I am going to commence embroidering a piano-stool Thursday, and Helen a piece to frame. Friday I recite in History, Geography, Botany and Parsing. Saturday is for writing compositions. Every month the literary societies meet: they are the young ladies that write compositions on a given subject, and read them before priests, the nuns, and any persons they may see fit to invite to come in. Sister G—— has given me an *invitation* to write an address to St. Joseph's Society asking admission to it. You may know that I rather dislike to do it; but I shall, for it must be of much benefit to the young ladies to be members of the Society. Every month the good and bad marks are read, and those that behave themselves well enough are put on the table of honor at the end of the year; that is, they have their name put into a gilt frame and hung up in the parlor; but I rather think it would be vain for me to aspire to that honor, though perseverance may do it. Give my love to father. After he gets home from Washington you must write me about the inauguration."

Through some fault in the distributing offices, their letters were delayed in reaching home, and their mother wrote by a gentleman of Montreal, in great anxiety to know why she did not hear from them. Debbie replied under date of March 11: "I have no doubt that my letters left the convent, and that all that have come to the convent for me I have had. I

think the trouble is somewhere else, for I have not the slightest idea that my letters have met with any impediment in the convent. The young ladies tell me that they never have had any trouble with theirs, and more than that, I have too high an opinion of the nuns to think they would stop a letter going home, and much less tell me that the letters went, when they did not. I am very contented, and you need not give yourself any uneasiness about us. The nuns are very kind, and are altogether different from what I thought they were: they seem very happy, and enjoy themselves quite as well as any one in the world could, and better, perhaps. Helen says that she is perfectly contented, and that you need not be in the least uneasy about her. I am getting along very well in my studies, and am very well pleased with my music teacher."

On the twenty-fifth of the same month, she writes: "I was happy to hear that you had received my letters, which were probably detained in some office, for you might find in them much more than I could remember to tell again. I am still happy in my home; there is nothing to prevent our being happy, for it is the pleasure of our dear "Tantes"* to see us enjoy ourselves; yes, they seek our happiness as much as they do our improvement. I wish you could see the nuns; you would be an ardent admirer of them if you only knew what lives they lead. *I will say plainly*, that we see but *few* with us that would give up all for the *love of God*, and live the life of a nun. The world occupies too much of their attention and love to forsake it; but what does a nun do? To be sure, she *loves* her home and friends, but she sacrifices *all* for God; they will meet their reward in Heaven. You have no idea of them! Their devotion to their religion, the gentle spirit they evince in every action, their love of prayer, and their *perfect charity*, are not to be witnessed in every-day life, I assure you. Do

* French for "Aunts," by which appellation the pupils of that Institution address the nuns.—*Compiler*.

not think I am going into ecstasies about the nuns, and shall follow in their footsteps at some future day. No; I am not so sober yet as that. I do not think I *could* do as they do. I only think they are *Christians in every sense of the word*, and any one who knows them must form the same opinion in a very short time. You will excuse me for taking so much of my letter for my "Tantes;" I only want you to see them, and I will assure you that your mind will change. I am getting along in Music very well, and I think I have an excellent teacher. My teacher in drawing would not allow me to proceed in monochromatic, until I had taken lessons in penciling; so I commenced, and she says I get along remarkably well, and shall do a large piece in monochromatic to take home in July. French I am not very fond of; but they talk it so much here that I cannot fail to learn it; my teacher tells me that if I apply myself, I shall learn it easily enough. Helen's studies are Music, French, History, Philosophy, Grammar and Arithmetic. I think she is perfectly contented and will remain so. I have had letters from all my friends since I came here, and you may be sure I find it a great pleasure to have so many correspondents while in a convent. How did the inauguration pass off? If father has come home, write and tell me the events that occurred; give my love to father, and tell him I shall write to him soon. Every letter is seen by ma Tante N——; but I do not care, as I do not write or receive anything, but what I am willing she should read.

From a letter written to a young friend in Burlington to whom she was devotedly attached, (and who has kindly furnished me with many interesting letters from which to make extracts), I select the following, under date of the 28th of March. "You know how I felt about coming into a convent, and may be surprised when I tell you that I am perfectly contented and would not leave it on any consideration whatever to attend school elsewhere. Although I sometimes sigh for the dear friends I left in Burlington, it is better for me to be here. Home too! I of-

ten wish for the charms that surround the family fire-side alone; though we may be happy elsewhere there is no place on earth to compare with it. We may visit places that are beautiful, that are grand, yet the heart will turn and cling fondly to home "be it ever so humble." This my L—— knows. Do you remember how often we used to stand on that beautiful green lawn beneath the branches of those old trees and watch the last rays of the setting sun reflecting their gorgeous colors upon the placid waters of our dear Champlain? and do you remember how we used to cast our eyes up and down the shores in the direction of our homes? you cannot have forgotten those moments so happily spent, and I, though happy in my new home, yes, very happy, cannot forget them, but look back upon them with pleasure."

During the first few months of her convent life, Debbie was, though perfectly polite in her deportment towards all, distant and reserved also, especially with the nuns—declining to enter into conversation with them, or to form familiar acquaintance with any of her young companions, who, while they admired the charms of her person and manners, and respected the abilities which rendered their gifted young rival conspicuous in the competition of the classrooms, were more captivated with the winning gayety and artless frankness of her sister. Time wore rather heavily away with her for the first month; though not at all home-sick, her spirit did not harmonize with anything around her, and she sought relief from its weariness by most diligent application to study, and intellectual exercises. She complained that so much attention was bestowed, as it seemed to her very unnecessarily, upon religion, (the season being that of Lent,) and that she could not turn her eyes in any direction without seeing some object which suggested thoughts of Eternity. To the weekly instructions in the class-room—given by the Sisters in explanation of the truths of Divine Revelation, and always conducted colloquially, that the pupils may offer such remarks or ask such questions as they desire—she was,

however, a deeply interested and intelligent listener, though she seldom ventured any remarks herself upon the subjects under discussion. The solemn services of Lent, the moving meditations, the earnest exhortations to repentance and the soul-searching examinations of conscience, which always form a part of the daily chapel exercises, of that penitential season in a convent, were not lost upon her. She was not willing to acknowledge her first favorable impressions even to herself, or to manifest them by yielding any outward tokens of respect to the rites which had awakened them, beyond the mere external conformity which was exacted from all the pupils, for Protestants as well as Catholics were required to attend services in chapel, though allowed to use their own books of devotion or Bibles during the time, if they wished. In this conformity, as in the most attentive and strict compliance with all the regulations of the institution, she was so exemplary as to be regarded, even within the first month after her entrance, as a pattern of excellence in those respects, both by the teachers and pupils.

During Holy Week, she was more depressed than ever, as most of the scholars were engaged in the absorbing duties of the season, out of study hours, to the great abridgment, if not entire cessation of their ordinary recreations. On Holy Thursday, March 24, when her young companions went to the chapel to offer their adorations to our Divine Redeemer before the Blessed Sacrament, on the day upon which we commemorate His institution of that sublime memorial of His dying love, she wandered about quite lonely, and at length seeing her favorite teacher, towards whom she was beginning to manifest some affection, (though she carefully abstained in the presence of her companions from showing any regard to one teacher more than another,) and in whose tender and faithful heart she quietly confided all her little trials and difficulties, she complained to her of the oppressive sense of loneliness which was weighing upon her spirits. The good Sister advised her to get a book from

the library for her amusement; seeing one lying on her table, she asked if she might take that. The Sister smilingly assented, thinking, as it was the "Rule of Faith," that she would hardly find much in its contents which would prove attractive or interesting to her young mind. Debbie, however, took it away with her. It was one of the many remarkable circumstances by which the hand of God guided this singularly favored soul, that, in its peculiar state at that juncture, this book proved to be the best one which could have been selected for her. To her careful perusal of it, during the silence and quiet of that holy season, we may safely ascribe the subsequent clearness and firmness of her conceptions of Catholic principles, both in theory and practise.

The next day after this occurrence being Good Friday, the chapel was arrayed in its mourning drape, in preparation for the solemn and affecting services of the day. Debbie begged permission to go with the sisters to see it before those services commenced, which was accorded. She was deeply moved by the sorrowful aspect it presented. The young ladies took no breakfast, but a small piece of bread and a glass of water. The sister having forgotten to order butter for the Protestant pupils, did so as soon as she noticed the omission, but observed that Debbie refused to take any. She told the Sister she did not know what she should do with herself during the long services in the chapel. "Did our Divine Redeemer not die for you as well as for others?" asked the sister. "Yes, ma Tante, I suppose He did."

"Well, can you not return thanks to Him for His infinite mercies exhibited in the great sacrifice on Mount Calvary, and bow down in humble sorrow for your sins, which made that sacrifice necessary, meditating deeply upon those momentous subjects at this time, solemnly set apart for their commemoration, for this one day at least; after all that he has done and suffered for you?" She was so impressed by the suggestions of the good Sister that she passed a great part of the day in the ladies' chapel, and in tears.

That she might not attract the attention of her sister and her companions, she would go out occasionally among them, and passing through the various groups in different rooms, that they might say, (if she was inquired for,) that she had just been there, return to her chosen place in an obscure corner of the chapel, to reflect upon her sins and the great expiation offered for them, and to mourn over them in deep contrition. Several of the young ladies saw her there at different times during the day, and told the teacher mentioned above, that Debbie Barlow was kneeling in the chapel and weeping sadly; they were told not to speak of it, or appear to notice it. She always dated her conversion from that day. It was then she was first led by God's blessing upon a word "spoken in season," to see the "exceeding sinfulness," as she expressed it, of her whole life thus far, and her need of the Divine grace. Fervently did she pray, as the hours of that mournful but blessed Good Friday wore on, that the same Holy Spirit which had now illuminated her soul with a new light, and inspired it with new desires, would perfect the work He had thus begun, by "guiding it into all truth," and "abiding with her forever," to be her Comforter and her Protector in this life, and her exceeding great reward in eternity.

Early in April she wrote the following letter to her mother—the date is not given: "MY DEAR MOTHER: Your letter was received some days since, and I should have answered it ere this had I not been so slow at writing, for there has lain a letter in my drawer half finished for the last few days. I cannot imagine, mother, why you should so often regret sending us here. I have told you repeatedly that I was very happy here, and that I could not be happier elsewhere. You are assured that the advantages for obtaining an excellent education are to be found here, and that the religious feelings of the young ladies are not intruded upon by the Catholics. I will tell you again that nothing has been said to me either by my teachers or my friends unless I asked them some questions in relation to their faith, which they of

course answered. Helen is in ecstasies to think you are coming so soon, but you know that I am not generally so much excited by good news as she is, therefore I try to make her think sometimes that you will not come, for she would be so much disappointed if you should not. I am in hopes to see you the first of May, but even if you do not come it will not be long before we see you, for school closes the 15th of July. Helen is well, and sends her love. Give my love to grandmother, to all of my friends, and to father and the little girls. Write soon and often to your affectionate daughter, DEBBIE."

Soon after the foregoing letter was written, she discovered that one of her young friends, who was very pious and particularly attached to her (and who is now, as we may humbly hope, rejoicing with her in a better world, she having departed this life some months previously to Debbie), was making a novena, or nine days' prayer, to obtain, through the prayers of St. Joseph united with her own, some special spiritual favor at the hands of God, and was convinced that the object of it was her own conversion. Having importuned the young lady in vain to reveal it, she made some light remarks bordering upon contempt in relation to such prayers, which wounded the feelings of her to whom they were addressed. A few days after, when they had entered the class-room in the morning, her thoughts reverting to the impropriety of those remarks and the grief they had caused her friend, she tore a fly leaf from her class-book, and wrote with a pencil upon it, so hastily that it was almost illegible, the following expressions: "My Dear Katie, you know that on Sunday last I guessed what the object of your novena to St. Joseph was, although I almost knew what it was before. And you cannot fail to remember how lightly I spoke of your prayers for the intercession of those holy souls, who were the chosen persons of our Father in Heaven to protect His only Son, our dear Saviour. Dear Kate, they must have hurt your heart too much at the time to forget them so soon. Will you be surprised when I

tell you that I meant very little what I said, and will you be more surprised when I add that, at heart, I am already a CATHOLIC! Yes, Kate! I trust your novena has reached the Heavenly Throne, and that its object has been attained on earth. There has lain on my heart a *load*—yes! in my gayest hours you might have seen, if you cast a look on my face, a troubled expression, one of anxiety, and what caused it? The conviction that I *ought* to be a Catholic and *would* not. Last night I thought I could endure it no longer; my heart was willing, and I did seek for advise from one of the nuns. I have not read to convince myself, nor have I prayed until quite lately, but others have done the latter for me, which I will ever remember. I must *some time* be a Catholic! I can be nothing else. Even if I read only my Bible, I *must* believe the truths of that Church. Yes, Kate, believe me, I am a Catholic, and pray for your affectionate
DEBBIE."

The same day she wrote the above, she asked the teacher whom she loved best, to give her a medal. The Sister told her she would give her one if she would promise to wear it, which she did. That medal she never put aside; it was laid with her fair and precious form in the grave. She often asked this Sister for explanations of the doctrines and rites of the Catholic religion. Her questions were evaded under one pretext and another, as it was a violation of their rule for a teacher to speak of religion to a Protestant pupil. When she was determined not to be put off thus, they were answered as briefly as possible, and under protest as it were, on account of the rule, the Sister telling her she would rather she would not ask them, advising her also to meditate for herself upon the great truths of religion, and to pray fervently for light from Heaven to guide her soul. Her frequent expressions were, that she read only her Bible, but she found confirmation of some Catholic doctrine or practice upon every page of it, and that many passages which mean nothing to Protestants, were full of sig-

nificance when placed in the light of the Catholic definition of them.

Before the close of the month of April she had won for her name a place upon the "Table of Honor," with those of thirteen others whose high merit for progress in their studies, and perfect decorum of deportment alone, secured that distinction for them. Very few indeed are so successful as to attain it within their first year as pupils! The last of April she was elected by the school as one of the two maids of honor to the May Queen, which offices were held during the remainder of the year. This election marked not only her place upon the "Table of Honor," as the candidates are chosen from its list, but also the high estimation in which she was held by her young companions, the choice having been almost unanimous. Speaking of it in a letter to her mother a few days after, she says: "I wrote you yesterday by B——, but it never entered my head to tell you that I have the great distinction of being one of the May Queen's maids of honor. Perhaps it was from *humility* that I deferred telling you until my teachers told me to, for you are *well aware* that I have a good share of that. But I must enter into the subject of my letter, for I have but a few minutes, as this must go to-night." That subject was in relation to the white dress necessary for the occasion, as they had not yet received their summer costumes. The letter she there alludes to is, I suppose, the following, written a few days previous to the date of that one: "Your letter containing — dollars, was received some time since, and should have been answered before this; but time passes so swiftly that days and weeks slip by unheeded, and I forget that it is time I should answer my letters; and, besides, every hour in the day is adapted to some particular study or amusement, and we hardly know how or where it goes. After your letter arrived, I purchased every thing we needed, with the exception of the things we have at home. You asked in your letter if the bonnets and mantillas would do for us? Yes, they will, and Hel-

en can wear her dress. I would like you to bring our *barége* dresses and my black lace cape. I think of nothing else at present. I was just called down and received a letter from you, saying that the illness of father would prevent your coming to see us at present. I am sorry, but at the greatest it will be about ten weeks before we go home.

"I am sorry to hear that father is so unwell, but hope his sickness will pass off without any serious effects. How is grandmother now? Tell her that I hope to see her well enough to come down to our house often, while I am at home. Give my love to her and all my friends, and tell them that they need not expect me home from home-sickness; for, as summer advances, I find the convent pleasanter than in winter; and as I was very happy through that season, I am sure I shall be during the summer months. I am very well, and Helen is getting so she looks like a very healthy girl."

When they were preparing for the coronation of the May Queen, she went with the companion who had made the novena for her, to get a piece of carpet from the sanctuary of the young ladies' chapel, upon the altar of which the Blessed Sacrament was also kept. When she was within the sanctuary, and in front of the Tabernacle—never having been so near it before—an indescribable feeling of awe came over her, (just as she stooped to take up the carpet) and raising her heart towards it she breathed within herself, with humble simplicity and sincerity, this aspiration: "My Divine Lord Jesus, if Thou art, as the Catholics believe, really present in that Tabernacle, I adore Thee with all the powers of my soul!" After saying this in her own mind, the full assurance of the truth of that sublime mystery which was destined to be from that time as an anchor to her soul, sure and firm, stole like a flood of light over her spirit, with such overwhelming power, that she was lost to all sense of every thing around her, for the few moments which followed this her first act of adoration before our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist; when her com-

panions, having spoken to her several times, (in a whisper, of course, for none may speak aloud in that Presence,) touched her upon the shoulder, and, arousing her from the joyful contemplation, hurried her away to the scene of their preparations. This little incident was recorded in a small memorandum-book, which she carried about with her, and in which she noted down every event of each day. To her great chagrin she lost it, but it was afterwards found and preserved, by a singular and apparently accidental circumstance.

The letter of which the following is a portion, was written on the 15th of May. "Mr. B——n called to see us last week. He said he had seen father a short time before, and told him he would come and see us. He seemed to be somewhat surprised at my thinking so much of the convent, and had a good deal to say about the Catholics, etc. He saw, on entering the parlor, some paintings and images of the Blessed Virgin and saints, and after looking at them for sometime, he exclaimed, '*What superstition! what Idolatry!*' 'What is it?' said I. 'Why this flummery worship of saints, images, etc.; don't you think so?' said he, addressing me. 'No,' said I, 'you are very much mistaken; it is neither idolatry nor superstition; for, to begin with, they do not worship them—it is only honor or reverence they give to them; but this is not the first time I have heard that Catholics did this and Catholics did that, so I do not find it strange. All I know is, that they are *very different from what I heard they were.*' He said he thought we were kept pretty well by our looks, especially Helen. Cora and Sarah passed through Montreal about two weeks ago; they stopped to see us, but did not stay but a few minutes. How is Cora's brother? She said she hardly thought he would be alive when she got home."

Debbie has been described to me by her teachers as possessing at that time, a rare combination of sprightliness and serenity, which imparted a peculiar

charm to her character, and to her manners a "nameless grace." She differed in many respects from most girls of her age, and manifested none of that affection for some particular nun which they are apt to show by choosing favorites among them. One evening the young ladies were each naming her favorite nun, and expatiating upon the good qualities for which she admired that favorite, enumerating and reciting these in a sort of chant. Debbie remained a silent listener, when one of them exclaimed: "Well, Miss Barlow, you have said nothing; who is your chosen favorite?" "I love them all!" she replied, in her tranquil manner, but with deep feeling. "Oh, what a cold, indifferent person you are!" they exclaimed; "we do not believe you really care for any one!" "Perhaps," she said, "if you could see my heart you would think quite differently." Her perfect habits in every respect as a pupil seemed to result from an innate sense of propriety, which governed all her movements. Every duty appeared to be performed without an effort. Her sweet and engaging modesty, her lovely conduct and easy politeness towards all, seemed to flow spontaneously from her well regulated heart. These excellences cost her no effort, indeed, at the time, but they were the result of the exercise on her part of constant and thorough self-discipline. She realized and proved the truth of that maxim of the glorious Thomas a Kempis, that "a watch over the senses is the foundation of purity, the discipline of peace, and the mirror of devotion."

In the regular routine of school life in a convent, while there are but few stirring events or varied incidents to busy the pen of the narrator or interest the general reader, there is still by no means any lack of interesting and even exciting variety to the pupils. Every week is enlivened by some affectionate device on the part of the teachers for their amusement, with which they are often taken by surprise, as it were, to enhance the pleasure, and to promote the object for which they are expressly designed, by breaking the tranquil round that might otherwise become monoto-

nous. Thus, to the pupils after the first irksomeness of its discipline and requirements is past, time glides imperceptibly and pleasantly away, while habits of perfect order in all their studies, occupations and recreations, of inestimable value to them in after life, are as imperceptibly acquired and permanently fixed.

In this manner did it pass with our young friend, when she had become habituated to that routine, and she always recurred to those months which were most free from any occurrences to mark the flight of days and weeks, as quite the happiest of her life. When the time for the annual examination and vacation was approaching, she had become so much attached to her "convent home," that she began to be oppressed at times with the fear that she would not be permitted to return to it at the close of the vacation. She was determined, however, not to think of a lasting separation, which would be so full of grief for her as among the probabilities of her future. Under the pressure of these emotions she wrote the following, as an interchange with some of the dearest of her young friends and class-mates, who also offered corresponding written expressions of their sentiments and feelings, as the time for parting drew near :

"Six months!—I can hardly realize that so long a time has passed since I came to the convent; it seems rather a few happy days, with little or nothing to obscure their brightness. For what are the troubles of our school days? Nothing. They pass away with the evening sun, leaving behind no trace of sorrow upon the heart. And here in our peaceful home, where every thing breathes of naught but unity and love, can trouble mar the joys of our young hearts? No!—and now that I leave my second home for a few short weeks, I would fain express my admiration of its precepts, and my love and gratitude to my teachers. But what pen can portray the feelings of a truly grateful heart? Ah! it would require one far more able than mine. I could almost throw it aside, and exclaim, *words* can not express them! Each day I have seen more to admire, more to love—each day

found some new example of the devotedness of those under whose care we are placed, some new mark of their tender solicitude for our welfare. Here a word of advice, there of encouragement, each tending to smooth the little impediments we chanced to meet, and urging us onward in the path of duty, and at the same time filling the soul with the deepest gratitude to those whom we may justly deem our truest friends. And now as we are leaving, beloved companions, let the words of admonition we have here received be ever before us; some are bidding a last farewell, but I have before me the bright prospect of returning to the spot where so many happy hours have been spent, and the recollections of which memory will ever retain."

When her parents came to attend the examination, her worst fears were well nigh confirmed and she saw with the deepest sorrow that she would probably be called to endure a final separation from all to which she had become so strongly attached. Her emotions upon leaving the convent were so painful that, three years later, when she was with her beloved teacher at St. Eustache, she entered upon the fly-leaf of the book in which she kept her diary there: "I came to the convent, the first time, on the 9th of February, 1853, and left it the 15th of July, the same year. These two days were the most unhappy days of my life, but from different causes. The first, because I was unwilling to remain in the convent; the second, because I had to leave it."

CHAPTER II.

WHEN our young friend returned to her home, and was again among the friends of her childhood, they all expressed their entire satisfaction with her remarkable improvement, both in mind and person, during so short a space of time. I cannot better describe her personal appearance at that period, than by giving the words of Cardinal Wiseman, in his description of the youthful St. Agnes, whose name was afterwards given to our beloved Debbie in baptism. "In her countenance might be seen united the simplicity of childhood, with the intelligence of maturer age. There not merely dwelt in her eyes that dove-like innocence which the sacred poet describes (Cant. 1st, 14th), but often there beamed from them rather an intensity of pure affection, as though they were looking beyond all surrounding objects, and rested upon ONE, unseen by all else, but to her really present, and exquisitely dear. Her forehead was the very seat of candor, open and bright with undisguised truthfulness; a kindly smile played about the lips, and the fresh, youthful features varied their sensitive expression with guileless earnestness, passing rapidly from one feeling to the other, as her warm and tender heart received it."

Soon after she reached home, the depressing conviction that she should return no more as a pupil to her "dear convent home," settled heavily upon her, causing sensations of "inexpressible regret." The alarm of her devoted parents—perfectly kind and indulgent in all other respects—was so great, upon dis-

covering the course which her thoughts and inclinations were taking in religious matters, that they even forbade her keeping up any correspondence with her beloved friends and teachers. Her favorite one among these, (who was now removed to the Mission Convent at Yamachiche, where she remained until transferred from there to St. Eustache,) being wholly unconscious of the turn matters had taken, awaited for a long time the arrival of the promised letter from her dear child, when her fears being awakened lest ill health or some other accident occasioned her silence, she wrote to inquire the reason why she had failed to fulfill the promise made at parting. The following is an extract from Debbie's reply to that letter:

"FAIRFIELD, Sept. 18, 1853. You think I have forgotten you; no! I am not capable of forgetting those I love, and, so long as I think of friends and kindred, so long will I remember ma Tante St. A——; but when this heart becomes *cold* and *indifferent*, insensible to every earthly affection, when it ceases to think of friends, then will you be forgotten, and not till then; but methinks that time is far distant, far, far! They call me cold-hearted, ungrateful; but those who say this mistake my character and disposition, allow me to say; for, far from being either, I never forget a kindness, and I am sorry to add that it is not in me naturally to forget an injury; I can *forgive*, but it is hard to *forget*. Now, my dear Tante, I presume you will say I am *very wicked*, and that your *pauvre enfant** is not much changed, that her *head* is still the same; but I will leave this for something more interesting. My reasons for not returning were numerous. I *wished* to go, but mother wished me to remain at home; she thought it was so far away, besides she thought my health would suffer should I remain in a convent, and *many other reasons*. My parents and friends were much pleased with the improvement I made in my studies, etc., etc.

* Poor child.

Two dear cousins of mine are going to Montreal next week. I wish you were going to be there to teach them *French*—you had so much patience teaching your '*pauvre enfant*.' "

Her reply to the second letter of this friend was written under the fear that, if she expressed what she felt, all correspondence between them would be forbidden. It was so reserved and constrained, so unlike her real feelings in its tone, that when she afterwards happened to find the letter, while remaining for a year with her friend and teacher at St. Eustache, she destroyed it. Soon after she received the reply to it, she went to St. Albans to pass some days with a female relative from another place, to whom she was very fondly attached, and who was then stopping a few days in a hotel at St. Albans. While there, she wrote, under the sanction of the relative mentioned, (who fully reciprocated the affection of the beloved child, and who, though a Protestant, thought the opposition to her feelings had been carried too far, and would, if continued, defeat its own object by securing the dreaded result,) the letter, a portion of which I shall here give. It was dated "St. Albans, Dec. 23: 1853:" and began with apologies for the coolness of her last, and explanations of the reasons, manifesting in a most affecting manner the conflict between her desire of rendering strict obedience to the requirements of those nearest and dearest to her and whose wishes she sincerely respected and the warm impulses which moved her to express the deep and abiding affection and confidence she entertained towards the friend who was, next to them, dearer to her than all others while she knew that the injunctions requiring her to make so painful a sacrifice of her own feelings were the result of a total misapprehension of the real truth on the part of those imposing them, and continued: "I have searched earnestly and with an unprejudiced mind, as far as I had the opportunity, the catechisms, records, and writings of the Church of Christ—you understand me, the *Catholic*—and as I told you often, very often, I found much in it

to admire. I have not changed in that respect. I came home with a mind very different from what it was previous to my going to the convent, and my friends soon discovered it. Not that I ever expressed a wish to unite with the Church. No! I was not yet prepared to judge of the other sects of Christians, and I felt that I must look for a while upon *their reasonings* in regard to the matter; and I have, I have read and conversed with many; and have at last decided to be guided by *faith* and *my own reason*. I have heard the Catholics ridiculed and assailed in every possible manner, not by my own relatives more than by others. It has seemed to me that it would amount to more than three months taken together, that I have spent talking with ignorant, superstitious, wilfully blind and intolerant Protestants. I *could not avoid it*. One would come in, 'Well, Debbie, I hear you are a Catholic,' and from that would run on until I have been compelled by my own conscience and better feelings to stand up in defence, as far as I was able, of a religion I respected, and in many things loved. I would not, and I will not, sit and hear a person *ignorant* or not, so go on with rail-road speed against the clergy or the religious orders of females in the Catholic Church; *that I cannot put up with*. At last I have refused to hear anything in reference to the matter, unless they asked these questions in a civil, respectful manner. I have had controversies and conversations, etc., etc., until I am tired of the name of Church, and feel perfectly reckless. I *will* defend the nuns, no matter where they are, and if the inference they deduce from this is that I am going to become a Catholic, they are at liberty to do so. I have a relation whom I am stopping with now, and who is very kind and considerate for me. She has just given me a large beautiful gold cross. I shall value it very highly. At the hotel where I am now stopping there is a lovely woman boarding, who is a convert from Protestantism to Catholicism. She lost her only daughter last spring, and *she* had spent some time in the Convent of the Sacred Heart in New York. She wishes

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me to give her love to you. She thinks *nuns* are *per-*
fect. She that was Jennie Hall (now Mrs. Lynn,) is
failing very fast; she cannot live but a short time;
she told me she would write to the convent, but she
was not able. She is very happy, and seems to wel-
come death almost."

CHAPTER III.

ON the 4th of January, 1854, and soon after her return from St. Albans to Fairfield, Debbie wrote to the young Protestant friend, to whom her letter from the convent was addressed, the one from which I make the following extract :

“ Beloved L——: Yours was just received, and as you request an immediate answer, I have stationed myself at my table to write to you. You know not how happy I was to hear from you again, and I will now tell you *how* I have written, and how many times. In September I received a letter written from Shelburn : I answered it, and soon after went to Madrid and spent two weeks : as soon as I reached home, which was Saturday, I sat down and wrote to you, and a week from the next Sunday I received a letter from you saying that you had not heard from me since you were in Shelburn, and you wished me to *write immediately*, and I did so, requesting an answer as soon as you received mine. I then waited three weeks, and, not hearing one word from you, I wrote again, which was about a week since. Undoubtedly you will receive the last mentioned, but will know that it was written previous to the reception of yours. Yes, indeed ! my dear L——, you are forgiven, and I shall forget it all : I only hope it will strengthen our friendship, and the confidence we have reposed in each other may grow more and more perfect. This little interruption has not diminished my love for you : no ! far from it. I do not now feel as though any thing but death, nor even that, could make me love you less or forget you. My spirit cherishes the fond

hope that angels watch our daily intercourse with the world, and my soul delights to muse upon the goodness of One who, in His infinite mercy, has provided a Home for the weary travellers of earth, the happiness of which no mind can conceive; and I believe *firmly and steadfastly* that we are guided by the angel visitors to earth, and that they are often messengers of those who have gone before us. This may be a picture of the imagination, but I believe it is so. Therefore, should Death call for a friend of mine, I should not think I had lost their love after that separation. You may think I have strange views upon the subject, and speak in rather a singular manner of *death and eternity*; but, to tell you plainly, my dear friend, I have not the fears of either which I once had. Formerly I could not endure the thought that I must leave this earthly home; but I feel differently now. I do not wish you to think I have been under the influence of Methodism or Presbyterianism—that I have been to *revival* preaching, or any thing of the kind. I am just as far from any of those things as can be imagined. I do not say I am any better than I ever was; but I do know I am much happier and better contented with my lot, whatever it may be. I am sixteen to-day: venerable person! am I not? “Sweet sixteen” that poets sing so much of; thy charms, thy joys are but too soon gone. “Passing away,” like all of earth! Childhood *has* gone, and with it many of my most joyous and happy days. I would fain call them back. Alas! they are gone, and the present is passing too swiftly away. But why repine while Hope, blessed messenger! whispers of better times, and fills my soul with peace?

Not long after the foregoing was written, Debbie and Helen visited friends in Highgate and Burlington, and after their return to Fairfield they attended school there together. April 23d, 1854, Debbie writes from Fairfield: “I am attending school, and enjoying myself very well. I often wish to see you, my *true* friend, and very often speak of you as such—

so often, that I am accused of thinking of little else but my convent home and its inmates.

A little more than a month later we have the following, in a letter to the same friend: "Fairfield, Sunday evening, May 28, 1854. It is a lovely night—calm and serene as a summer evening. A cool, refreshing shower has added new beauties to nature, and only a slight breeze, which I can imagine is like the floating of angels' wings around us, disturbs the air. Yet, afar off I hear the murmuring of a rivulet, and the hum of children's voices in their youthful sports. It is truly an hour I love. *Afar! afar!* methinks I hear the low chimes of convent bells, as they sound the hour at which we were wont to retire; and imaginations which are now vividly cherished by me bid my eyes gaze upon a scene of uncommon interest—a number of young girls ascending steps which lead to a little chapel, unassuming in its appearance, but whose precincts are hallowed beyond description. They enter there, and every knee is bent, every head is bowed, and all pride, envy, hatred and jealousy are (or should be) buried. A pale lamp burns steadily before the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, shedding its rays upon the sacred walls, and reminding each soul which there presents itself of the bright light of faith which should reign in our hearts. Prayers from the lips of youth, blessed beyond the reach of a doubt by faith, ascend to the throne of the Most High God. And the sweet Vesper Hymn to the Blessed Mother of Christ rises upon the evening silence, with oft-repeated petitions for her intercession. And the slow, measured steps of those children, as they leave this place of prayer, show with what reverence they regard the sacred spot. Yes! my dear Tante, I often, *very often*, let my imagination rove to those scenes. *Do you, can you think I have forgotten them?* They remain in my heart, *sealed* in the casket of memory, and I look back upon those days as some of the happiest of my life.

"Helen has been very sick with inflammation of the stomach and bowels. She never was so ill in her

life before, and she is now very miserable. Her strength left her entirely—so much so that she had to be taken the same care of that a child would. I have been confined to the sick room so long, that I have written no letters to any one. You will excuse my long silence, will you not? I am not ungrateful; no, I am not! Accuse me of anything else, but not of that! I love the nuns, and shall ever remember their kindness to me. They may think I have forgotten long ere this. Some one has been in my room to-day to see Helen, and you never heard so much fun as was made of me (afterwards) about a table in my room on which was a *cross*, my two Catholic prayer-books, my chaplet, a picture of an Angel Guardian, an image of the Blessed Virgin, a picture of St. Joseph, and another of the Blessed Virgin and Infant Jesus—all the pictures given me in the convent, and two vases of flowers that I had gathered from the garden to ornament the table. My books were examined, etc., etc., comments made upon this and that, and I let them proceed. I told them these things put me in mind of the convent, and I loved to look at them. They thought I had better go up and unite with the '*Romish Church*.' I told them I did not know but I *should* unite with the *Catholic Church*."

Again, from a letter dated Fairfield, June, 1854, I extract a portion: "Oh, ma Tante! it is a happy thought to think that I am cared for, *prayed for*, by you! and now, in the silent loneliness of my own room, I look back upon the past, and recall your kind look, your approving glance, and wish I could once more behold them! Here, alone by my couch, I ask God to bless your life, to add new joys to your heart, quicken you by His Divine Presence, and receive you in His eternal home at last, where, amid an angel band (and pure as they) I sometimes imagine I see you now. Would that I could think I should meet the good and the just there—should see their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, and stand among them! Heaven seems to me *such a Home*!

prepared by Him, that I long sometimes to see its glories; but as I listen to my feelings a voice asks me, 'Are you *prepared to die?*' If I *were* prepared, I would go willingly. Fairfield, June 25th, 1854. I think of you often and *often*, and shall be under obligations while *life* lasts, and perhaps in *eternity*. I am assailed on all sides by those who think I am willing to become *less ignorant* than I formerly was. I am ridiculed; yes, *more than that!* But my God *knows* I will not yield, with His help—His grace! I am here, and must now conform to many things which I fain would not; but I will satisfy them. I will peruse their blasphemous writings, and if I can find any thing *pure* I will subtract it from the impure. I will *give them their due*. I will know the faith of all; indeed I do know much now, and I find nothing congenial to my feelings but the *One True Faith!* To-day I went to the Presbyterian Church, and when I had heard the sermon about half through, lo! Popery must take a *thump!* He said it was nothing but Paganism with another name!—that the Catholics had no *light from Heaven!* no *lights of Revelation!*—that the heads of that Church were among the most *licentious* of earth!—and, finally, that on the very face of the Church were marked those words, (which St. John applied to *Pagan Rome*)—I will not repeat them; read for yourself, *ma Tante*, the 17th chapter, 5th verse of Revelations! I *listened*; I grew dizzy and blind! but took my shawl and walked out of the church. I was obliged to sit in the porch until I grew composed, and then came home. Some one asked my mother why I came out of the church? and she told them, '*Debbie would not hear the Catholic Church talked about in that way; and so she came home.*' I suppose the whole town will be up in arms about it! I do not know but they will *mob* me. 'Ha! ha!

"This morning in St. Albans, (where I went to attend church,) at the administration of the Blessed Sacrament, the rail around the chancel at the grand altar was filled with Americans, who have been con-

verted to the Catholic faith within the last few years, and they all reside there, with the exception of a family from Philadelphia, and two or three from an adjoining town."

A very dear friend and convent companion of the sisters, who embraced the Catholic faith when quite young—previous to her acquaintance with them—and who afterwards came, at Debbie's request, to remain with her during her last sickness, has furnished me with a number of letters, of which the following bears the earliest date. It is addressed to the young lady at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Albany, N. Y., where she completed her education.

"FAIRFIELD, VT., Oct. 18th, 1854. Many, very many thanks, my much loved Carrie, for your long, kind letter of the 13th inst. You little know how precious it was to me, coming, as it did, from one with whom I had spent so many happy hours. I have read it, and dwelt upon each sentence; praying that your wishes might be fulfilled, and my own desires with regard to that *one subject* might be answered.

"Oh C——! I long to see you and converse upon the past. How often I wish we might again be united in that sacred place, and offer our prayers upon the same shrine once more. But, though separated, let us still invoke the same Protecting Power, and the same intercessions. I will never forget your kind advice, C——, and hope I never have for a moment yielded to doubt as regards *our* holy faith. Though many are the trials which every one must pass through, I thank God that He has sustained me thus far. His precious promises come up before me when my mind desponds, and raise my faltering spirit above the things of time. I rely upon His word for my hope. And, my dearest C——, when I think of *Jesus* and the *Cross*, how can I refuse to live in the Faith He established here, and calls upon me to love and profess? No! my friend, I trust this will never be my course.

"The news from the convent interested me very much. I think I shall write to them soon. Still I do

not know. Give my love to all when you write, and say whatever else you please about me. They doubtless think that I am negligent and forgetful; but, C——, I am not! E—— H. passed three weeks here last winter, and from her I hear occasionally from the convent. Helen corresponds with her.

"You find your present home very pleasant, I should judge from your letter. I almost wish myself there with you. I imagine I should like it very much. Do write me some of the rules, regulations, &c. You say you meet some of our old friends sometimes. Give my love to Mary C. and Maria M. I have often thought of them since our parting, and can recall scenes in which they were actors, as vividly as if they were of yesterday. Though some of the memories of the past are shaded by sorrow, I can look back and dwell upon those scenes as the brightest spots in my existence.

And now, my dear C——, when are you coming home? When you do, you must come to see me; remember this. My constant desire is that we may meet again, and renew the friendship so happily begun. Adieu! and believe me your very true friend,
"DEBBIE."

In Nov., 1854, the following was written to her "best friend," at Yamachiche: "Your dear, kind letter, ma Tante, was received last night, and I would fain express to you my thanks for your kindness in writing to me again. My *reasons* for not answering your former one were, that I was *forbidden* that pleasure. I will be plain in speaking to you, my friend, (for I consider you as such) my trials I believe increase, for I am plain in telling them that I shall unite with the Church which I consider as right. I have been debarred the pleasure of going to Mass until the last two months, when I told them I would never step inside a Protestant Church, (excuse me, I mean *meeting-house*,) if they did not allow me to go; but they would not let me, and I then sat, Sunday after Sunday, by my window and looked at the Catholic chapel, while the Blessed Sacrifice of the Mass

was offered up. Finally they told me to go if I wished to, and I went. After that the Catholics were ridiculed by my acquaintances more and more, and the next Sunday there was Mass they would not let me go. I then made this agreement: I told them if they would let me go to Mass once a fortnight, that is as often as it is here, I would go to Protestant meetings the remainder of the time, until I joined the Church. This suited pretty well, and, with a good deal of ridicule, they allow me to go. Last Sunday the Bishop of Burlington and two priests, beside our priest that preaches here, came to Fairfield and staid until Tuesday noon. I went to Mass on Sunday morning. Mr. McGowan, our priest, came and spoke to me, and asked if I would like an introduction to the Bishop. I told him I would. He said, after Mass he would introduce me to him. Mother was with me, and she said so much against it after Mr. McGowan left, that I would not stay to see the Bishop, but I sent word to Father McGowan that he could deduce his own inference from my not going. I formed some acquaintance with *him* about a year ago, and he has heard something from a lady in this place about the opposition I met with. I have never conversed with him at all. Monday morning I went to two Masses and heard a sermon. I was alone; our family did not go; so I found my way to the vestry, and saw the Bishop. His name is DeGoësbriand. He told me he saw the Sisters of the Congregation a short time ago, and that they spoke of me to him. He talked with me some, and I like him very much. Tuesday I went to Mass and heard a sermon. *My God knows how I enjoyed myself!* To-day there is no Catholic service, and I have been to a Protestant meeting. Ma Tante, *it is a real penance*, I assure you! next Sunday I long for: then there is Mass again! The whole town are giving me up as one *blinded* by *errors*, they say. *Poor people!* they know not that within my heart, amid all my trials, there reigns a *peace* which the *world* can never give! They know not that the *Arm* of the *Almighty* sustains me! They know not that *my prayers*

are constantly offered up to the Throne of the Most High for *their good* ! When I tell them that my constant prayer is to have my faith increased, they tell me I can *never find faith in the Catholic Church* ! Oh ! then, where can I find it if not there ? *No where* ! Oh give me *faith, faith* which, like a rock afar off in the distant seas, though the waves and storms of life beat forever against it, shall still be immovable ! I do not wish to murmur ; no ! far from it, my trials will not compare with what others have suffered, and do suffer, for the same : I am not right, perhaps, even to mention them. I am not, may Heaven forgive me ! I have, perhaps, lost the esteem of some by my adherence to Catholic principles ; if so I cannot help it. I trust that you *always pray for me*. Remember me always, for I would ever live in the memory of those who led me to the *truth*. I often think of my convent home : it is still very dear to me, but I fear I shall never return to it as a school-girl. I *may* visit it. Oh ! how I *long* for the time to come when once more I shall behold its peaceful walls ! and if I live I shall, for I mean to visit Montreal some time. Give my love to all, and tell them to pray for

"DEBBIE."

The following fragment, without date, but written during the same month of November, was enclosed in a letter to her Protestant friend at Burlington, as a strictly private communication :

"My dear friend, I still continue in my strong adherence to Catholic principles. You may think it strange, but, L——, every day brings me some *convincing* proof of the *truth* of that Faith. I *am not prejudiced*. I read every thing on both sides ; I converse with all, and yet I am more and more convinced that I am right.

"I go to the Catholic Church once a fortnight, and the rest of the time to meeting, and every time I enter a Catholic Church I love it more, and its Divine ordinances ; and every time I hear a Protestant sermon, I dislike them more and more. I do not know, but I suspect there is some "danger" of my be-

ing a Catholic." Shall I lose your friendship? By doing so shall I forfeit your respect? I hope not; though I shall some of my friends, I *know*. But I love my *God* and *Saviour better, far better*, than all the earth, or my friends. You may be surprised to hear this. You never knew me to speak thus, did you, my darling friend? But it is even so, and if He calls me to unite with His Church, I must.

"FAIRFIELD, DEC., 17, 1854.—Pardon me, I pray, my beloved Tante, for not answering your letter sooner. I should have done so, but I have not been very well, and for some other reasons, *perhaps too trifling to mention*. I was pleased to hear from you, and I know your prayers are ever raised for me to the Throne of the Most High. The pure truths you speak in your letters, endear them much to me. To-day has proved to me again, that my prayers should be strong and fervent. I have been to Mass, and oh! how my soul longed to join the few who knelt and received the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ! Oh! the *presence of Jesus* in the Blessed Sacrament!—how glorious, how *consoling* the thought! Who, *who* can doubt it, ma Tante, if they *knew* the happiness of one who believes in the Real Presence, how they would sigh for that *Faith*! Do you not think so? My kind friend, you ask me if I wear the medal. Yes, I do; and I forget not my Mother, if so I may call the Blessed Virgin. I presume I am sometimes heedless, and forget my duty, but I trust my God forgets me not. How thankful I should be that He has given me the grace to see the *true way*: I was reading to-night in my prayer-book, this passage: "Where much is given, much will be required." Then how much will Almighty God require of me! I have been blessed! oh, how much; and my life ought to be spent better than I now spend it. I still attend Mass when it is celebrated here, though sometimes with trouble, for my friends oppose me as much as ever. I try to follow all the rules of the Catholic faith as well as I can, but here I have no friend to advise me, none to consult with, and I have no reading-

matter; that is no *books* and *papers*. Protestants put plenty of their books into my hand, and I read them all. A short time since a lady visited our house, who is the wife of a Presbyterian clergyman. In the course of the conversation, the 'Romish Church' was called up, and she remarked in this manner: 'Well, I believe if there is a *bottomless pit* in the future world, the *Catholic priests* will go there!' 'Mrs.—' said I, 'it is not for *you* to judge where they will go.' From this a conversation commenced in which she told me that Catholics believed their *priests infallible*; that for *money* they could *get their sins pardoned by a priest*! That the Catholic Church had *destroyed the second commandment of God, and worshiped images*!! and that they gave *more honor* to the Blessed Virgin than to God!!! By the way, *she* considered 'the Mother of Christ as a very good sort of a woman, but no better than any other Christian!' These are her precise words, and *I could not convince her that Catholics did not believe the first of her remarks*! She *knew better than I did*, of course! I asked her if she ever read any Catholic books. 'No, and she never wished to!' (Of course I thought her *particularly well qualified* to give *reliable information* on the subject after that admission.) Among other things, she said that convents were *horrid places*, and *nuns awful creatures*! I have told you this as an example of my daily *confabs*."

About two months after the date of this letter, her parents decided to send her and her sister Helen to Fairfax, a village a few miles from Fairfield, where there is a flourishing institution under the direction of the Baptist sect. They chose this place, both on account of its convenience of access for themselves, that they might see their daughters frequently, and doubtless because they also hoped that the close attention to study there required, and an entire separation from all Catholic influences and associations, might divert the mind of Debbie from the contemplation of religious subjects. Soon after they went there, she wrote the same friend at Yamachiche, to whom most of her letters to the convent are addressed:

"FAIRFAX, MARCH, 1855. I thank you very much for the beautiful little picture you sent, and I assure you I shall treasure it with much care. It is decidedly lovely. The face of the Infant Jesus is so sweet, and that of our Holy Mother. Oh! why is it that such pictures inspire us with greater love for the originals? Do you know, ma Tante? I know it is so. I must tell you how much my pictures are admired. I look them over very often, and I am often requested to show them. I explain the design as well as I can to them, and they frequently exclaim, 'How beautiful! how lovely!' I generally tell them truly that this is only the *commencement*, only the first step, or one of the *least* of the beauties of Catholicity. I am here in Fairfax attending school. I did intend to go to Burlington, but my parents preferred to have me here, so here I am. No Catholic Church; no Catholics. The school is large, and a very good one, I should judge. Most of the people of this place hate the Catholics bitterly, and have *very* strange ideas concerning them. Almost every one had heard before I came here, that I was, in sentiment, a Roman Catholic. I said nothing, but the first morning that I went into the school I had about my neck my *cross* and *medal*. After I came away and reached my boarding-place, a young lady told me that she heard it remarked by several that the eldest Miss Barlow was a Catholic. 'Is it so?' said she. 'I believe it is,' said I, and no more was said. I suspect I am an object of pity among them all. My sentiments are the same that they were when I left the convent. I find no Church as yet whose precepts and faith I *love* as I do the Catholic. I am sure that I have chance enough to find the *true faith* if it is to be found among the Protestant churches; but I find it not there. I still love the faith professed in my convent home. It is still dear to me, and it is not because I have constant intercourse with Catholics, or have their books to read. I see but *very* little of educated, intelligent Catholics. I have never seen any priest, with the exception of Father McGowan twice, and the

Bishop of Burlington once. I have no books except those two you gave me, and one of them a young lady from Burlington has borrowed. You perceive I have not much to guide me; no, nothing but the *Hand of God alone*. Oh! I pray that I may not go astray from the path of right! May my steps be guided in the only *true* and *pure* religion. Every one opposes me as much as ever. My *father* I *care* for *most* of *all*. He worships me, I know. Every one says he loves me better than any of his other children. * * I am harrassed to death by people talking against the Church and against me; but I do not care. I *must believe* what God has directed me to. It is a hard hill which I am striving to ascend, but I hope that I may not faint until the summit is gained. Sometimes I think a strong arm is thrown around me, and then *new strength* is added to my weariness, and a hand seems pointing to the *Cross* and urging me *onward*. And often times I almost imagine that a sweet voice whispers: '*My child I will pray for thee!*' and my petition is, 'Sweet Mother, pray for thy feeble but trusting child.' With our Heavenly Father's *care*, the *love of Jesus*, and the *prayers* of the Blessed Virgin, can I, oh, *can I* wander from the truth? I have told you plainly my feelings, and if they *change*, *you shall know it*. There is a young lady going from this place to the convent in Montreal in about three weeks, and there has one gone. Every one is wonderfully concerned about them."

In her next, written during the same month, and from the same place, the following passages occur:

"Let me tell you my friend, distinctly—I want you to understand me *fully*—I am a Catholic, *firm* and *unyielding*. I believe it is the *only true Church*, and the only one with which I shall ever unite myself. You ask me what I "intend to do?" I am *assailed* by every one. In fact, I do not have one moment's peace any where. My parents are bitterly opposed to the Catholics. But Heaven help me I will be *firm*. I shall be more a Catholic when I leave this school than ever before. I have

not told you much about the school, have I? I will say a few words before I close my letter. It is a Protestant school, in every sense of the word, and we are obliged to attend prayers and go to their church, etc. Last Sunday, I heard a sermon which was strong against '*Romanists*,' as they term us. The sum and amount of it was, that the Catholic Church taught *salvation by works*, and *not by faith*. I *smiled* at their ignorance, and gave it no further thought."

The next letter was written from Fairfax in April, about two weeks before the close of the spring term of the school. She doubted whether she should return for the next term, though Helen probably would. Her mother was contemplating a visit to her friends in the western country, and she might be needed at home during the absence of her mother. She speaks in the most moving terms of her strong desire to visit Montreal after the return of her mother, but did not dare indulge the hope that her wish would be granted, and adds:

"I am really feeling bad enough these days: everything looks dark. My friends all against me, and *God alone my refuge!* Why, ma Tante! look at that last sentence again! I did not *mean* to write it *just so*. I ought to be *satisfied* with a kind friend in Heaven for my refuge. You understand me, do you not? But I know that in becoming a Catholic I lose many who have been warm friends of mine. This I do not care for; I *gain far more* than I *lose*. But I sometimes feel very sad that my parents are so opposed. It seems hard. I *wish* they would *read*, but no, they will not; but they wish me to, every Protestant work that I can find, and I *read* everything in the shape of *argument*, that I could get hold of against the Catholics, but my *heart* is just as much *there* as ever; it *can* be *no where else*. 'Catholic I am, Catholic I must be!' These are the words I addressed to a Protestant lady in this place, some time since. I am going to have some books soon. I had a letter from Caro. G.—a few weeks since. She is in Albany, at the convent of the Sacred Heart. She seemed

to recall the associations connected with our bright days in Montreal, with much pleasure. I was rejoiced to hear from ma Tante, in Montreal, that I had been received into the society of the Children of Mary at the convent. Oh, how often I wish to be there, if *only for one hour*, if not more! I have yet to find a place I love so well. Every evening my thoughts are with the dear inmates as they go to their beloved chapel, and before Him who is there present, my soul bows down as in days gone by, and lingers to tell its sorrows and its trials to that dear Saviour."

About a week later, she wrote to another lady of the congregation who was deeply interested in her. The following is a portion of that letter:

"FAIRFAX, APRIL 26, 1855. Would that I *could* follow the example of our sweet Mother in all things! and I promise you to imitate her virtues as far as I am able. I hope you will pray for me that I may succeed, in a measure, at least! Jennie says you asked her who selected my books? Who selects them? I can answer very easily—*Protestants!* The purest works of *Protestant Divines* of all sorts, *a* e given me to read, and I *have* read them carefully and *candidly*. I do not think it would hurt *any* of my Catholic friends to read what I have, for *they are very harmless!* I think I am *more* of a Catholic when I *finish* one of those books, than I was when I *commenced!* I sometimes think people do not care what I like or do not like. In this place it is no matter *what* is said to *injure* a Catholic's feelings. *They are of no consequence.* But, thank Heaven, I *am* a Catholic; nor would I change my faith for all of theirs!"

About that time a distressing occurrence in that vicinity caused the deepest regret to the children of the Church, and gave its enemies an opportunity which, in accordance with their accustomed vigilance and malice, they did not by any means fail to improve to the utmost by spreading accounts of the circumstance abroad, with multiplied exaggerations and triumphant sneers. After alluding briefly to the circumstance, in a letter to Yamachiche, and to the

grief and reproach which the scandal had brought upon her innocent spirit, she says "I have only to summon up all my courage to endure and face all such things. I am often asked the question, 'Do you not wish you had never gone to a convent? then you would never have been a Catholic.' Oh, ma Tante! I would not give up my belief in the Catholic religion if I could be assured of a long and perfectly happy life *here* by so doing! There is such *peace* to be found there! Oh, heaven forbid that I should ever retrace my steps and wander farther from the fold of the good Shepherd. Some call me an *enthusiast*; others say I must have had very little *stability of character* to go from Protestantism to Catholicity. But why should I care? If I am confident that our heavenly Father will strengthen me in my course, I am sure I ought to forget these little trials. I am not striving *now* to please the world, but a higher object is mine, I trust."

CHAPTER IV.

UNDER the same date of her last letter to Yamachiche, she wrote to her friend in Burlington:

"My own dear L——: Yours was received this afternoon, and this evening I have been writing to the convent, and thought I would write to you before I slept. We are fond, *firm* friends yet, my dear L—— but I fear we shall have something to render our affection less warm; I hope and pray it may never be the case, but our circumstances are going to be thrown in a widely different sphere. Now, L——, do not be astonished, it is so; I feel confident of it. My L—— can never change, and its warmest aspirations will ever be for you. You must be aware of my undying love. The reason I have for saying this is the fact of your speaking of the revival in Burlington. I wonder not that you sometimes wish for that peace which the world can never give; all need it here, and I would fain see all those I love in possession of it. . . .

You are aware that I am in sentiment a CATHOLIC; now, my dear friend, I am speaking soberly and in earnest; therefore, listen—with Catholics religion is not a *mere opinion*, but something higher—it is FAITH. I am convinced that I can never make any other church my home, and I am resolved to become a member of the Catholic Church as soon as I can, let the consequences be what they may. If my friends do not consent, I must go without it. I am not striving to please the world, but a High and Holy One. In taking this step I know all will be against me, but I fear not. And, L——, there are those who

will dislike to have you with me after that; there are those who would gladly break our friendship after I take such a decisive step. I refer to no one particularly, but to your Protestant friends. But remember, you have not a better friend in the world than the one who is at heart a *firm Catholic*.

Now you perceive my reason for commencing my letter as I did. Your friends will fear my influence with you, and you will soon see what steps they will take. I keep nothing from you, my own dear friend, therefore I could not withhold my thoughts on this subject. Loving you as I do, I would not willingly say or do anything to injure your feelings, but I ought to tell you this, do you not think so? Heaven forbid that our friendship should ever grow cold! I have joined a society in the convent called the CHILDREN OF MARY, Miss H—— of this place is attending school there, and is now at home on a visit—returns next Monday—I have been writing letters to send by her to some of the nuns and scholars.

If you could hear all that is said against Catholics in my presence, you would pity poor Debbie; I feel it as sensibly as any one could, I assure you, and though I am not a professor of that Holy Religion, I would fain be. You see L—— how I feel, and you would not blame me if you only knew *all*."

Contrary to Debbie's expectations, she returned to Fairfax at the close of the vacation, for the Summer term, and soon afterwards wrote the following letter:

"FAIRFAX, MAY 20TH, 1855. }

Saturday morning. }

My dear friend Carrie:

Pardon me for not replying to your excellent letter sooner. I was not here when it arrived, and for that reason alone I have not written long before this. I think as you do about excuses, and therefore will not fill my letter with them.

Many thanks for your warm congratulations upon my reception into the lovely society of the *Children of Mary*. I can only say in return, that I am most happy to think they deemed it proper to admit me.

Oh Carrie, you know not how many pleasant days I have had in consequence of it! To know that I am one of our sweet Mother's chosen children is indeed a happy thought. I only wish that I may be a true follower of her example while on earth. It is now the Month of Mary, and fast passing away. I am here among those who ever scorn the thought that she can pray for us, yet I have endeavored to lift my heart often to her, and implore her *powerful* intercession.* Oh! who can doubt that Jesus, our dear Saviour, grants Mary many things which we poor mortals in this sinful world could not obtain without her aid? Who can doubt that *angels* hover around us here, guiding and guarding our wandering steps? Who can deny the beautiful doctrine of the "Invocation of Saints," and the faith in "Angel guardians?" Beautiful indeed to the Catholic heart are these things, and the more they are scorned for their faith in them, the more fondly and devotedly do they cling to it.

When I glance at the Protestant world I cannot find one thing to make their religion beautiful. They have parted with those pure and lovely doctrines which the Catholic holds most sacred: those forms which render the services of our Holy Religion so sublime, so tenderly beautiful, and have taken in their stead the cold formalities of a *protesting* creed. They have exchanged the Catholic Faith for "reason"—"common sense"—and the mysteries of faith are to them absurd and false ideas. Oh, Heaven forbid that I should ever wander from the Fold of our blessed Redeemer, that I should ever substitute my poor, frail, erring reason for *Divine Faith*! I am a Catholic, Carrie, a firm one, so far as I can be now, and the thought that I am even a believer in that holy religion sometimes overpowers me. The thought that God has given me the grace to see the Truth, and the faith to believe it, sometimes impresses my heart so forcibly that I feel as if I must give my life to His service, as a small return for His infinite goodness. How much, my dear Carrie, *we* have to be

thankful for, who have been brought from the dark uncertainties of Protestantism to the *bright and living* Church of Christ; though you have had a greater joy than your poor friend Debbie, in having already entered the fold of the Good Shepherd, yet I trust that happiness is still in store for me, and that the waters of Baptism with their purifying influences are to be poured upon my head, to render me the child of God. Oh, that the happiness I anticipate on that day may be fully realized! And then the day of first Communion! methinks one would like to live a life over, to receive the Bread of Life again for the first time. To my heart there is nothing so beautiful, so calculated to awaken our slumbering love for Jesus, as the thought of His unbounded love for man—weak, sinful, erring man—in leaving him the Holy Eucharist; in preparing a sacrament on which the hungry soul may feast; in giving us that Bread which Angels gladly stoop from their high home in heaven to adore. Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Communion! Oh, glorious thought, oh, precious belief! In His presence we can refresh our souls, and upon His breast pour out all our sorrows, all our griefs! I have been home and passed a week, returning to Fairfax with regret.

While at home I visited the Catholic Church and burial place twice and even in that found some consolation. I cannot tell you with what feelings I entered the burial place. It was just at evening, and the last rays of the sun were falling upon the scattered stones which mark the resting places of the departed; when I opened the gate and entered, I felt that I was treading upon holy ground, and bending the knee upon the green sod that covered a mound upon which a large cross had been erected, I offered up a prayer that "the souls of the faithful departed might rest in peace." I stopped by the lowly graves, and read upon the marble tablets the request of many dying Christians, "Pray for the departed soul." I asked myself the question, "would a prayer be offered for the repose of my soul if Death should call me

away?" A voice whispered, "Yes; there is a Church where prayer is offered daily for departed souls." Oh happy thought! I felt in those moments that death was nothing but the door opening into a happier world. I received your beautiful medal; accept many thanks, my dear friend, for it. Remember me in your prayers to Heaven. I shall expect you to visit me sometime next Summer, as I suppose you will be in Burlington.

I received a present from ma Tante the N—— a few days since—a book, the title, "Fabiola," Cardinal Wiseman.

Do write me very soon if you can, for I am very lonely here. I have not attended Catholic Church for four months. Is it not too bad? Helen sends a great deal of love to you; she is here with me at school.

"Pray for me ever, and believe me ever the same,
"DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*"

The latter part of the next month she wrote the following to her friend in Burlington:

"FAIRFAX, JUNE 27TH, 1855.

My own dear L——: It is one of those lovely mornings we so often see in June, and as I sit by my open window, I cannot but think of one who is now sad and sorrowing; and is it strange, my beloved friend, that I should feel prompted to write to her? Can you think who it is L——? Can you think of any one whom Debbie loves fondly and devotedly? a kind friend, who has ever remained *true*, in joy and in sorrow? I am sure you will know who it is.

Your letter brought sad news to me, my friend, but in the death of those we love, there is that consolation offered to the wounded spirit which often soothes and lulls to rest its tumults. Heaven is far brighter than Earth: then why mourn the loss of friends when we have the full assurance that they are at rest? It is true, the grave looks dark to us, and there is reason in this. Earth's partings are sad, but, if we are faithful, we shall soon meet our lost ones in a world where the parting word is never spoken. Friends we

part with here are the gainers; and while we weep over their remains we should remember that their portion is bliss. Oh my dear L——! death is not much if we are only prepared. It is only the passage from this sinful world to a better one, and if we are only ready when Our Father calls, our death-bed will be a happy one.

Who would wish to remain forever in this world of pain and trouble, when one of perfect happiness is prepared for us? Who would choose the society of earth, when the blessed company of saints and angels await us in Heaven? I would not; no, L—— dear, nor would you, if you stop to reflect. Then mourn not for her who has been called to her true home; it is the will of Our Father in Heaven, question not His right.

I wish I could see you, if only for a short time. This morning I have been thinking when I should go to Burlington. I expect to leave Fairfax in three weeks, and then I shall either go to Montreal, or to Bristol and Burlington. I may go to Burlington, even if I do go to Montreal."....

The next letter to Yamachiche, which was preserved, was written from Fairfax.

"JULY, 1855. I think my parents are getting more resigned to my being a Catholic, though I do not know how long it will last. When I was at home, they told me that if I *must* be a Catholic, they supposed I *must*; but they thought I could not be in my right mind. I think I shall persuade them to let me go to Montreal when the year closes, and then I hope to unite with the Church. Oh what a blessed season that would be for me. But I *hope* against *fear*; and, therefore, will not anticipate too much now. I earnestly pray the day may soon arrive when I shall be within that one fold, whose Shepherd is Christ."

.....

She laid this letter aside when she had written thus far, to write one to her father, begging of him to permit her to accompany a very agreeable party of ladies and gentlemen, who had politely invited her to join them, and who were going the latter part of the

month, from Fairfax, Sheldon, Highgate and Swanton, to Montreal. The two young ladies whom she mentioned as having gone to the convent from Fairfax, were expected to return home with the party. After entreating to be permitted to go, she adds: "If I go I shall stay at the Mountain school most of the time. I have had a very polite invitation from the nuns to make them a visit, and as many of the young ladies who are now there, leave this fall, I would rather go now than later. And now, father, as far as some other matters are concerned, you know what I would like to do *not* because my friends are opposed to it, *not* that as far as worldly interests are concerned, I shall be any better off, neither is it because a proselyting influence has been thrown around me; this is not so. It is because I think it is *DUTY*. But I will say no more; I will leave you to choose as you think best. But one more word I will say; I shall be no worse than I now am. I shall be Debbie, still!" Her request received an absolute refusal as to all its features, and she concludes the letter to her friend, which was laid aside until she should hear from her father, thus:

"My parents will not consent to my going to Canada, as I wrote to you that I wished to. They had rather have me go any other way; but I do not wish to go from home again, until I am able to say, *I am a Catholic*. Yes! I wish the world to know it. I have received some books from Jennie—one, the "Imitation of Christ," another, the "Trials of a Mind," by Dr. Ives, formerly Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, of North Carolina. I cannot find much more to write now, unless I make myself the subject. I am not sure it will prove a very interesting one, but will say a few words. You know I am the same in my determination to be a Catholic, and I feel that my Father in Heaven will support me in all my difficulties. Yes, His arm is mighty, and why need I fear? I am sure the Mother of our Divine Redeemer will ever intercede for me, if I look to her with confidence. I know I am each day getting more courageous, and strength from on High is given me. I hope the day

will ere long arrive, when I can say that I am a Catholic; then the world can assail me if it chooses, and I can fly to that Church, to Her sacraments, for consolation in my trials and afflictions. Sometimes I think I cannot wait; but I am sure the day is not far distant when I shall be received into the bosom of that Church, whose teachings are purity itself."

During the same week, in which the concluding part of the foregoing letter was written, she wrote the one which contains what follows, to a member of the Congregation, in Montreal. It was in reply to that conveying the invitation alluded to in her letter, to her father:

"MY DEAR TANTE: You know not how often I have thought of my convent home, within the last few weeks and my heart has yearned to be with you there, but the sad thought that I could not, has prevented my writing. Do not think that Debbie has forgotten her kind and true friends. No, she has not. The intelligence I have to convey, in this letter, is what I dislike to write. I begin to think, *ma Tante*, that I am going to be denied the pleasure of ever seeing the convent again. I can obtain no consent from my parents to return there, and what can I do? I thought I should make my first communion where I first learned to love the Catholic religion, but it seems to be ordered otherwise. I think I have waited long enough, for the consent of my friends to my union with the Holy Catholic Church." After the close of the summer term of the school on the 26th of July, she went to visit friends in Burlington and Ferrisburgh. She wrote to her friend at Yamachiche:

"FERRISBURGH, Aug. 18, 1855, *Tuesday Morning*.

.... You perceive I have left Fairfax, and am at this place, making my friends a short visit. I have been in Burlington for the past two weeks, and am to return there again, Thursday morning. I am not going to remain in Fairfax any longer, but shall be at home for some weeks, and I do not know where I shall go next. How I wish Montreal was my destination! You know I thought of going to Montreal

this summer; it was a trial, I assure you, to give it up, and I do not know now, when I shall go. I think I make some progress in getting the good will of my friends on the side of Catholic faith and principles; and though they are still much opposed, yet I can see there is a change, and I do trust the light of that day is slowly but surely dawning, when they will willingly say, '*You are on the side of truth.*' I do not feel as if the trials I have passed through are all for naught—no! oh, no! There are others within the circle of my dear friends who will yet follow in the way of Truth! Even look at my sisters. Their sympathies are all awakened for me, and the course my relatives have taken has made them feel as though 'Debbie' was right, or she would have given up before this! Two of my sisters, though quite young, one being fourteen and the other eleven, are really giving some uneasiness, because they are not willing to go to Protestant meeting, when there is Mass. Many times I have started for Mass, in the morning, and left them both weeping, because they were not allowed to go with me. I feel, sometimes, a responsibility resting upon me, which I need much Divine strength to assist me in being accountable for, in a right manner. I trust there is nothing that will prevent me from doing my duty, as far as I am able. Every day, almost, I find some new friends; some who can feel what my *true* situation is. Last week, or rather two weeks ago, when on my way to Burlington, I got as far as St. Albans, and supposed I must remain all day at the hotel. Father was with me, and what was my astonishment, after having been there an hour, to have him come into the parlor, and introduce a gentleman to me, as Mr. Hoyt, in whom I recognized a person of whom I had heard, who was formerly a Protestant clergyman, but who had the happiness of becoming a Catholic, some years ago. He invited me to spend the day at his house, and I did so. I found his wife one of the most lovely ladies I ever met, and they have a beautiful family of children. They are true Catholics, and in *them* I feel as if I

had found true friends, and those near home. They have become Catholics, after having been for years in the Protestant communion, and they *know what a person has to pass through in changing their religious creed.*"

Upon her return home, she found a letter awaiting her from her friend in Albany, to which the following is the reply.

"FAIRFIELD, AUG. 28TH, 1855.

"My Dearest Carrie: I always intend to be as charitable as I can, therefore I will not reproach you for not writing before; I thought it must be more from want of time than any thing else, that you did not write sooner. I fear you in turn will think me rather unmindful of your nice long letter, but my excuse is a good one. I was in Burlington when your letter arrived and did not get it until now. It was very welcome, Carrie dear; do try and write often. I find, my friend, that we do not forget each other yet, and I trust the same may always be said.

I wish I might be with you this evening, Carrie, for I feel the need of a friendly hand, and some kind voice to cheer me onward. Not that I am in a desponding mood, no, far from it; but then the sympathy of a kindred heart is sometimes cheering. Have you not often felt it so, my friend? But I must not murmur. How much more has been given to me than to many of my surrounding friends. Yes! a gift from on high—FAITH—while I can look around and behold so many living in unbelief of the truth, as I once did myself, I can feel that I am too thankless to Almighty God for having guided me to the door of the Church of Christ, where I still stand, that my faith may be tried ere I enter its sacred Portals. Oh, Saviour of all! make me *firm*. I am almost at the close of my probation, I trust. How often I pray that I may be permitted soon to see that day, that happy day! and hope bids me look forward confidently to it. I have much to contend with, but who would not be willing to suffer trials for the sake of *Him* who died upon a cross for us?

"Yesterday morning I was in St. Albans, and, the

church being open I went in, and there, before the *Shrine of our Immaculate Mother*, I prayed long and fervently that I might be *strong*. Oh Carrie! you know how prayer strengthens the soul! As meat is to the body, so is *heartfelt, sincere prayer* to the soul. It strengthens it for every duty. You have the privilege of attending Mass every morning, and what a privilege! I did not once realize that I should ever esteem it such a blessed one. Pray for *me* always at the Holy Sacrifice: be sure and remember me then.

"I never expect to return to the convent school, but every spot there is as sacred as ever to me, and at some future day I hope to visit it.

"I passed three weeks at Burlington, and saw your cousin, Mrs. T——, several times; was at her house twice, and in her I think I have found a true friend. I also visited at Mr. Hoyt's on my way to Burlington.

"I expect Kate Thomisson here in about a week to make me a visit. She is going to return to Montreal for another year. I suppose we shall have a fine time. How I wish you could be here also! When do you intend to visit Vermont? I think not this Summer from your letter.

"Write to me often, Carrie dear, and if you wish to unburden your joys and sorrows, you will find in me a true friend in whom you may confide.

"And now, Carrie good bye. Pleasant dreams to you to-night. Remember me to your dear mother, of whom I have so often heard you speak.

"Pray always for your friend,

"DEBBIE, *enfant de Marie*."

(To the same.)

"FAIRFIELD, OCT. 30TH, 1855.

"My much loved Carrie: It is evening: all is quiet and silent, and I am in my own room alone, wandering in thought among many bright scenes of the past, in which some dear friends now absent from my sight acted conspicuous parts. Ah, the joys that are past! Would that I could recall them!

"I am sad to night, Carrie, *oh how sad*. I feel

alone. No bond of sympathy is there between my spirit and those around me, and I am longing for the hours, "To memory dear:" but she whispers—"They are fled."

"You know, my friend, how long I have waited for the consent of my parents to my baptism. I have lingered until this time, but in vain. Can I consistently wait longer? My desire to be united to the Catholic Church in her sacraments is too great to have my probation lengthened out still further. I *must go!* It is wrong for me to put the matter off longer. I feel so, and I am willing to declare before the world that I am a Catholic. It is very hard to go against my parents' wishes, but God will be my support. I am ready, if my friends despise me for the course I take, to look to something *more certain* for friendship, more lasting for happiness.

"I wrote to Mrs. T—— this evening. I find her a *true* friend, Carrie, and I assure you I love her very much.

"I received a letter from the convent a few days since, but it was quite a short one. No great change, I presume, at Maria Villa. How I wish I could be transported there to night! Sweet spot! How often my heart, sad and weary of this world's vexatious trials, returns to thee!

"But why should I be sad? How much reason have I to thank our Heavenly Father that He has brought me to the knowledge of His Truth!

"Do write to me, Carrie dear, often. Your letters are always welcome. I love them *dearly*—I love them *long*—not in *coming* but in *compass*.

"Pray for me *always*

"With warmest affection yours,

"DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*"

Her next letter addressed to Yamachiche was dated at Fairfield, Nov. 20, 1855. After expressing great surprise that "ma Tante" had not received any letters since August, as she had written regularly to her, she adds: "When your letter came to Fairfield, I

was in St. Alban's. I went there to do some shopping, and remained two days. While there I made arrangements to be received into the Church, and one week from next Saturday will, I hope, witness my baptism, and the next day I hope to make my first Communion. I have mentioned to my parents my intention, and they neither consented nor forbade. But, thanks be to God, it is not necessary that I should wait longer, and when I next write to you I hope to tell you the glad news. We have two excellent priests with us now; therefore I can find some one to advise and direct me. I wrote to ma Tante—at Montreal, last week, and I told her I should probably never write to the convent again, until I could tell them that I was a Catholic in every sense of the word. I was weary of writing that the day was yet to come. I longed to say it had been my happiness to be received as one of the children of God's Church on earth. Pray for me that I may worthily receive the sacraments of our holy religion—that I may have a *firm faith* and a *deep love* of God implanted in my heart! I will write again as soon as I can tell you the good news."

"FAIRFIELD. DEC. 4TH, 1855.—How can I commence this letter? How *should* I commence it? How, but in asking you to join with me in praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God. Yes, my *first* request of you must be, that you will say with me, '*Thanks be to God!*' My desire has at length been gratified, and I have been received into the Church of Christ. What can I write to you? My heart is so *full of happiness* that I *cannot* write. What an *empty word* *Happiness* has ever been to me. Now that I *realize* what it is to be *truly* happy, I can look back upon the past and see that it has been almost a *blank*. The *hour of my baptism!* Can I forget it? No; it is now before me. The memory of it rushes full and fresh over my soul, even as I sit here and write. It is now past, but the inward feeling of my heart at the moment when those regenerating waters descended upon my head, cannot pass away! I must ever keep

in grateful remembrance, those sacred moments. I pray that they may ever be before me to cause me to remember my great obligations to my God! He has been so merciful to me, in bringing me to the fold wherein alone salvation can be found; what must be my ingratitude if I abuse those mercies—trample upon those graces! Pray earnestly for me my kind friend, as I am sure you ever have, that I may resist the temptations of this world. Our Heavenly Father has brought one more wandering lamb within the sacred inclosure of His Church, and unworthy as that one is, He has deigned to notice her; Yes, He heard my request, He has granted my petitions, and rescuing me from the impending danger, has 'set my feet upon a rock.' He has opened the door of His Church, and asked my soul to enter therein. He has brought me within the reach of His sacraments—has conferred upon me the title of *Child of God*! Oh blessed thought! How can I repay? In no way! I can only offer my penitential prayers and tears, and what shall I say of the intercession of the Blessed Mother of our Redeemer? Oh, my sweet Mother! my greatest advocate and refuge! my guiding star! would that I could thank thee more! Take my offering, which, it is true, is but little, and continue to guide and guard thy child. Would that all might learn to love thee—thou that art higher than any other created intelligence in the Heavenly Courts! Would that all might acknowledge thee to be the Immaculate Mother of God. Pray for me, and be my Mother still! Teach me the virtues which shone so conspicuously in thy life, and at last may I see thee in all thy glory above, where we will join in praising Him who saved thee from sin, and has rescued my soul from the consequence of sin, eternally and without ceasing! I have not yet made my first Communion. I preferred to wait until the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Holy Mother, on the 8th of this month. I was baptized on Friday last, (the thirtieth of November,) at St. Albans; I took the name of Mary Agnes in baptism. I have about the

same trials at home as ever ; perhaps I may say, *more*. But what are these ? I can look upon them now with little pain, and even consider it a happiness to bear them. I request your prayers for the conversion of my dear friends at home. You are the first one to whom I have communicated the good news. You were my first *Director*, as it were and you were not forgotten in my prayers at the hour of my baptism."

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CHAPTER V.

"FAIRFIELD, DEC. 25, 1855.

"A 'Merry Christmas' to you, my dearest Carrie, and a 'Happy New Year'! This is my greeting this morning, and from the depths of my heart I wish you all joy!

"To me, my friend, this has been one of the happiest days of my life. This morning, for the second time, my soul has been nourished by the 'Food of Angels.' Your conjectures were right, dear Carrie. The last day of November another wanderer was received into the Church of God—even your poor friend. Yes, unworthy though I am, the door has been opened, and I have been welcomed there. My baptism! but, Carrie dear, I cannot speak of it now. You can imagine better than I can tell you, what were the feelings I experienced at that time, and I will not attempt to utter them. I made my first communion on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lady. Oh, that happy moment! when Jesus came for the first time to take possession of my poor soul—when I first had the happiness of knowing that He was present with me. Oh, my dear friend! what love, what condescension is this, that Almighty God should come into these poor habitations, the souls of men, and make His abode therein! Yet who can doubt it, who can deny this beautiful article of our Faith? Real presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist! Oh consoling thought! that He is ever abiding here among the children of men, ever present upon our altars, ready to listen to our petitions, or to our tales of sorrow, and to pour the balm of consola-

tion into the broken heart. He is here to raise repentant, humbled spirits from the dust, to soothe all their woe, and to strengthen them with the "Bread that cometh down from Heaven."

Oh, Carrie! it is a great, a glorious thing to be a Catholic! but how great our condemnation will be, if, after receiving the gift of *Faith* from Almighty God, we abuse His love and His mercy! I tremble when I think of it—for poor human nature, so prone to evil, so quick to err! but with the grace of God we will hope to persevere. Let us pray for each other, dearest Carrie. My conversion must, I am confident, strengthen our friendship, already so strong in the days that are past.

I need not ask if you spent Christmas happily: you must have done so in your convent home. I received a letter from Mrs. T—— a week ago. She spoke of you, and wished me to write to you, which I should have done if your kind letter had not arrived. And Mary C—— is married. Give my love to her and to Maggie S——, when you see her. And dear Maria Melvin!—associated as she is with the remembrance of our convent home, the intelligence I received from you filled my heart with sadness. Still, Carrie dear, if she longs to go, we should not mourn her loss. I will and do pray for her.

I received a letter from Kate on Saturday last. She was well, and all our convent friends. Have you heard from Jennie S—— lately? I do not know what has become of her. Believe me your true and devoted friend,

"DEBBIE *Enfant de Marie*."

It is greatly to be regretted that no letters from Debbie to her faithful friend at Yamachiche were extant, or rather accessible, after the period of her baptism until the following March, when she and her sister Helen were attending school at Burlington, from which place she writes:

"*Thursday Morning, March 6th, 1856.*—My dearest and best friend, I will not give you cause to complain again of my neglect in writing to you. I arrived in

Burlington last Monday, and although I am quite busy arranging my studies, I could not think of letting this week pass, without sending one of my hastily written letters to Yamachiche. Oh, ma Tante! my happiness is so great that I cannot wish to have it alone; I want others to share it with me! Every day brings me more to realize the goodness of God in bringing me into His Church. Every day I find something more to admire, something more to love; and my heart is too full, and must needs speak its sentiments very often. To you, my best friend, I can speak of this inward joy. But how few there are around me from whom I can expect sympathy. *Jesus* has been the ONE to whom all my joys and griefs have been made known; and though often with tears I have approached Him, He has taken the load off my heart, and oh, such peace has taken its place!—*Tuesday Morning, March 11th.*—I have not been well for a few days, and could not finish my letter as soon as I expected. This morning I intended to have gone to Communion; but I arose with a severe headache, and I am obliged to walk some distance to church, so I deferred it until to-morrow. This is quite a disappointment for me, you may be sure; but I have the anticipation of receiving it to-morrow, and that will make this day a happy one necessarily. I find often my sad hours become joyous ones, in looking forward to the hour when Jesus will become my Guest; and though His reception is so cold from my poor heart, how can we have the source of all love so near our souls, and not feel its influence? Oh, how hard the heart must be that mourns not its base ingratitude towards Jesus, in the Blessed Sacrament! How He comes to us is still a mystery to me, when He receives naught but coldness and neglect from us in return. But His sacred heart is so overflowing with love for us, that it must give us constant proofs of that love. Oh, ma Tante! how I wish I might see you now for a short time. If I could only spend Holy Week with my dear convent friends! Three years ago I was with them all, and then I first learn-

ed to love our holy faith. Why I am not with you now, I cannot tell. I suppose it is the will of God; but I trust I shall some time visit you all. My hope is strong, and I look forward to the time anxiously. You are still in Yamachiche, and are likely to remain, I presume, for some time. Do you think Kate T—— will be a nun? I have thought, from some of her letters, that she would. I am sure I would be happy to see her in the *Novitiate*. Perhaps you think this singular; but I always thought Kate a person of very good mind, and I do not feel now as I once did, that the talented and gifted should belong to the world, and the ordinary ones to God. Far from it; just the reverse. When you hear of one of your former pupils becoming a novice, I am sure you are very happy, ma Tante. Is it not so? I presume you admire their choice of life, and, indeed, so do I. And now, good-bye: say an "Ave Maria" for Debbie, and go to the church on Good Friday, and thank our dear Redeemer for the gift of *Faith* He granted to your *pauvre enfant*, three years ago, on that day, praying that I may ever remember that it was His love and His mercy, that changed my heart! Do this, I beg of you, for Debbie—*enfant de Marie*."

"BURLINGTON, VT., MARCH 18.

"My Dear Carrie: I have not forgotten you, though you may have inferred this from my long silence. I have been very busy, and am just finding time to write to some of my friends. I ought in justice to have expressed my thanks to you for your last letter, immediately after its reception, it was so kind, so good: but I was preparing to come to Burlington, and am only now sufficiently settled to write you a few lines.

"I suppose you are so much engaged in your studies—this being your last year—that you will find but little time to devote to your correspondents. I declare, Carrie, I do not envy you. Do you wish to know why? You have only a few months more to remain in the convent, and then you will have to part with all the dear friends you have found there, and

leave that sacred spot to mingle with the world. I do not envy you! I know what it is to bear the change: and you have been so little among those who differ from you in your Faith, that when the time does come that you will be obliged to meet them in every place, and at all times, you will find it a trial more difficult to bear than you can imagine now.—The change will be so great! But perhaps I am mistaken. It may be that Carrie will remain for life where she is. Am I right? Although I love you dearly, I could say truly I would be proud to see you giving yourself up wholly to God. I am very glad you are going to write to Jennie. She often enquires for you, and I will give you her address.

"I have not heard from Montreal since Lent commenced.—Give my love to Mary, and any of my acquaintances you may chance to see. Pray often for yours, with much love,

DEBBIE, *enfant de Marie*.

"BURLINGTON, APRIL, 1856.

"My Dear Tante St. A——: I should have answered your last letter long ago, but I was waiting for a short time, that I might have some good news to communicate to you, and surely I have not waited in vain. *Helen is a Catholic!* She is not yet baptised, but will be very soon. She has been to confession twice, and has written to father and mother to obtain their consent. I have not much hopes of her getting it, and I am dreading the result, I assure you. I know there will be more trouble at home than ever, and, poor people! they will think the plague has entered their family. I presume they will think "Debbie's influence" is terrible; and, as there are three more daughters, they will fear for them. I hope for nothing! I fear everything! But I am strong enough to bear it. It is coming hard for Helen as well as for myself. God is my strength, and with His assistance, and the protection of the Blessed Virgin, my cross is a light one. I think my father will be here to-morrow, for they must have received our letters yester-

day, and they will be very much astonished, I know. I will finish my letter to-morrow. Have been to Communion to-day. Oh! I have so much to ask for, so much to be thankful for, in that sacred hour when the God of heaven and earth comes to dwell within my soul! So many desires to lay before the Sacred Heart of Jesus; so many infirmities to mourn over, so much grace to obtain! It is a happy time, and each Communion a never-to-be-forgotten one! I have had such excellent Directors since my baptism, also, that confession is getting to be such a glorious privilege! How often I wish Protestants could go to Confession just once! Their horror of the sacrament of penance would be removed forever, I am sure.—*Tuesday morning*—Helen has just come from the post-office with three letters; one written last Saturday, when their indignation was at its height. Monday, that was yesterday, they wrote the others, and are feeling much more resigned, and have given their consent, however reluctant it was. Helen will therefore be baptized on Thursday next, the Feast of the Ascension. I am sure you will congratulate me. I am sure, also, our prayers have been answered, and still trust the time is not far distant when all dear ones at home will be received into the Catholic Church."

The letter which Helen wrote requesting the consent of her parents, and to which her sister alludes in the foregoing, I will now give:

"*My Dear Parents*—This letter will surprise you much; but as you read it I have only one request to make: regard me with *charity*, and *believe* that I would not wound your feelings for worlds, if it could be avoided; but I have confidence in you. I am a Catholic. I have not yet made a public profession of my faith, but my *mind* is at rest, and I desire to act immediately. The *tie* which bound me most strongly to Protestantism is *broken*: by this I mean you to understand, that I am *free* from my engagement with Mr. —. It was *his* wish, that if I decided to embrace Catholicity, our engagement might be at an *end*; and yesterday evening I return-

ed his letters, and acquainted him with my decision. *It has been a sacrifice*, but not so much have I suffered from it, as I do from the thought that this must *give you pain!* But life is short. I may be here a year, a day, an hour, and then comes ETERNITY! You will say I have been influenced by some one. My *decision* was *made* without the *knowledge* of a *living person*.—*Why* I have doubted the truth of Catholicity so long, is more than I can tell. I am *ready* to *act* under any circumstances, and I *wish* I might gain your *consent*; but I hardly *dare* hope for it. Think not to *change* me, my *Faith* is too strong. If I meet with your displeasure, I can only look to *Heaven* for *assistance*, and bear the trial with all the fortitude I possess. Be *lenient* towards me—it is all I ask; and if I *have* to go in opposition to your wishes—*forgive*. I shall expect to hear from you soon. Your affectionate daughter,

HELEN."

When the reply to this letter was received, containing the consent mentioned in that of our dear Debbie, the sisters lost no time in making preparations for Helen's baptism. The arrangements were just completed when their father arrived, he having been called to Burlington on some business, and he came to see them upon his first arrival. After expressing his regret at the decision she felt herself bound to make, he repeated his "reluctant" consent, and went out to attend to the business upon which he came. In the course of an hour or two he returned, apparently much excited, and made some severe remarks, concluding by absolutely forbidding Helen to fulfill the intention she had formed, by being baptized. The sisters were perfectly astounded by this sudden turn in their affairs, but knew it was not their father's own sentiments he was uttering, so much as those of some person he had met, while he was out. When he first came and while he was perfectly calm, he had, although regretfully, confirmed the permission given in his letter, and Helen determined to act upon that permission in accordance with the arrangements she had previously made. I mention these circumstances thus minutely, because

she has been severely censured for acting contrary to her father's injunctions at last. He felt the justice of her course himself, so entirely, that he never reproached her for it; but when she returned home, received her with the same kindness as if nothing unpleasant had happened.

Our poor Helen! It would have seemed that her griefs upon another score were already sufficiently poignant, without this addition. But the hand of God was in it all! The trials which had darkened and wounded the gentle and sensitive heart of her sister, would have glided over her sunny spirit like summer clouds, without even obscuring its brightness for a moment. Therefore, her cross was fashioned in a different mould. But thanks be to God, who gave her "the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" She bowed meekly, even joyously to the heavy burden, (none the less heavy for her loving reception of it,) and bore it with the same generous firmness that her lovely sister had manifested before her. Yet was the conflict a bitter one; how bitter will appear in these lines written by her in one of Debbie's letters to her friend, at Yamachiche on the day of her baptism:

"Will you *pray*, ma Tante, for one who loves you dearly, yet deems herself unworthy of your love. Passing through deep waters I falter, and am tempted to turn back! God alone knows what I have suffered since I left my convent home! I trust He will give me grace to look beyond this miserable world for happiness—that happiness which He alone can give. Will you pray for your HELEN!"

On the second of May, the morning after Helen's baptism, Debbie wrote to her mother, in reply to a letter Helen had just received from her.

"BURLINGTON, MAY 2d, 1856.

"My Dear Mother: This morning I thought I would write you a few lines, and I am sure I hope they will be acceptable ones. Helen would write, but I thought, perhaps, I could spare her the pain of so doing, by writing *for her*. The subject of my letter is to be the answer to the one you wrote Helen

concerning Mr. —. . I will assure you of one thing to commence with, that she will not grow poor, neither will her health fail, on account of the disengagement. I can tell you what I know of the affair, and will *try* not to use '*Jesuitical deception*,' in doing it. Last winter when Mr. — visited Fairfield, Helen told him that she thought of becoming a Catholic, and he informed her that if it should be so, their engagement would be broken. He then requested her to send his letters when she should so decide. *If it had been my case he would have taken them then!* After her decision to unite with the Church was made, she wrote to him, returned his letters, etc., as he had requested. I think the affair has been perfectly honorable on her side. She has only done what his creed declares every one bound to do, that is, act according to their own convictions; and that they are answerable for it also. It pretends to be a Protestant principle, '*judge for yourself, and act accordingly.*' She had as good a right to say to him, 'Be a Catholic and I will marry you,' as he had to require her to give up her soul's salvation and remain a Protestant, and he would *fulfill his promises*. But he will remain where he *is*, in perfect ignorance of the Catholic Faith, believing they '*worship images*,' '*pay for the remission of their sins*,' etc., and a thousand other abominable falsehoods, and require her to join with him in his willful blindness, or give him up. '*He hates the name of Catholic!*' To be sure he does; because he *will do no other way*. If his love for *her* was what it should be, he would look with charity upon her faith, and have some respect for her opinions. I do not regret that she has become settled in her mind, for if she had married that gentleman, I should pity her lot. If she did not agree with him in his religious opinions she would be obliged to seem to, and her life would indeed be one of misery. I have no sympathy for him, except pity for his foolishness! Helen is very contented; says she thinks she is quite as good now, as she was two years ago, and if he chooses to think differently, all the same to her. She

says she loved the ideal not the real; and I doubt not she will live and very happily too, if he has chosen to withdraw his promises. Do not trouble yourself, mother, for fear it will have a bad influence upon her usually joyous spirits. I do not think she will think less of those persons who continue to treat her the same as ever. Give my love to all at home, and let me hear from you soon. Your affectionate DEBBIE."

A few days later, Helen wrote to her mother :

"BURLINGTON, MAY 6TH, 1856.

"My Dear Mother: Yours was received this morning. Mother, I think you *all* do me injustice. I am *not* laboring under any 'excitement.' When I tell you that for a year I have thought and read upon the subject a great deal, *will* you believe me then? Will you tell me that I have not regarded yours or father's feelings, or C——'s either, when I tell you that, times without number, I have wept, in the privacy of my own apartment, tears of *bitter* anguish such as few weep, when none but the Eye of Almighty God, my Heavenly Father, was upon me. When I tell you that at times I have felt as if I could give up my soul's eternal salvation rather than my *earthly love*, *will* you say that I have regarded no one's feelings? Oh, mother, *you* cannot think so! *You at least* will be my *friend*! *You will* think that I have loved at least as truly as I *have been* loved. I do not wish—I shall *never* wish to *retrace the steps I have taken*. I have acted *too deliberately* to be *mistaken*. I *know* that I *cannot* change! I am *confident* that *God* has been with me through all, that his Holy Spirit has guided me, and *aright*. I *knew* all that would be *said*. I *knew all* that would be *done*; and I felt for a while as if I should sink beneath the load. But *now*, ever since the *first drops* of the *baptismal waters* fell upon my head, have I felt strengthened to bear every thing and *any* thing for Him who *died* for me, and has brought me to the *true* faith of His Holy Catholic Church. Mother! think not that I shall *change* or *regret* the steps I have taken, for I shall not. I feel

for you, but I cannot see wherein I have done wrong, at least as regards you and father. If you think I have acted a dishonorable part towards C—s, I can only refer you to him, and *he* perhaps will do me justice. I was baptized on Thursday, the first of May, in the presence of quite a number of Protestants and some Catholics. I do not regret it, nor *ever* shall! Debbie wrote home a few days since. She would like to hear from you. Give my love to all. I remain, your affectionate daughter,

“HELEN.”

Debbie writes soon after: “MAY 10TH. My Dear Mother—Helen received yours of the 7th, and as she intends to write to E—— to-day, wished me to answer yours. I am in hopes to write to E—— myself, this evening, and if I do not, say to her for me that I hope she will not trouble herself too much about C—s. I do not think his apparent want of feeling has raised him in Helen’s estimation, and as for myself it makes but little difference what I think of it. Her letter to him was expressive of her true feelings towards him, and though she knew that he wished to be nothing more than an acquaintance after her profession of the Catholic faith, she told him she had the same sentiments of friendship for him as ever, and that she should continue to have. His reply was one which I should hardly have expected from a person of any amount of feeling, and I think Helen will will trouble herself but very little hereafter about the matter. He addressed her, ‘Miss Barlow,’ thanked her for her ‘offered friendship,’ as much as to *decline* receiving it. To make his indifference *more* manifest, he wrote on a half sheet of paper with a lead pencil! I have given you the sum and amount of what I know about it. She has received her letters to him, and destroyed them. We shall be ready to go home in about two weeks. I will write you again *soon*. Let us hear from you. Helen sends love. Remember me to all. In haste,

“DEBBIE BARLOW.”

I have given this circumstantial account, written

by themselves, of an affair which would not have been even alluded to in this work, but for the gross misrepresentations that have been spread, and the absurd and unfounded reports that have prevailed in relation to it.

The next letter we have from Debbie to her friend at Yamachiche, was written at Fairfield, "JUNE 8TH, 1856. A few moments I will be with you to-night in spirit, but it is denied me to be with you *really*. How I wish the privilege was mine to spend a short time in my convent home, but it seems impossible. Everything works against me in that project. I may not see you this summer, but one thing is certain, I shall not be a great while longer waiting to visit Montreal, for I am determined to go there the first time I leave home for any length of time. How *often I wish* I could be with you once more! This morning I approached Holy Communion, and if I could be allowed to express the joy of my soul to you, ma Tante, you would think Debbie never had cause to regret that she became a Catholic! To be sure, I sometimes feel myself deprived of the presence of God, and *sometimes*, I could be almost discouraged at my coldness, my lukewarm prayers and devotions; but I know if I submit to His holy will and bear these interior trials with patience, that He will not forsake me. As little as I deserve the many mercies Jesus bestows upon me, I must not complain if I am often in darkness. I wish, ma Tante, that I could become a *saint*! Is it wrong to speak so freely? But oh, how *much* more than the *desire* it requires! To *wish* to go on in the way of perfection, is only a little part of the *work*. The hill seems often times so long, and I fall so frequently, that I should almost give up, if I could not look beside me and see *Jesus* ready and willing to assist His weary child. Sometimes I think *this* life a *long* time—so little progress in the spiritual life. Good resolutions—confessions—communions—and immediately after, perhaps, we offend Almighty God! I may be saying too much; it might be better if I

kept these things within myself; still, I know you feel an interest in me, and would like to know my feelings, and how your 'pauvre enfant' enjoys her Catholic life. 'Enjoys it?' *Indeed I do!* What *would* life be, if God had not been so merciful, and enlightened my poor soul? What *should* I do without the sacrament of penance? How could I *exist now* if the Sacrament of the Altar; the Bread of Angels, were taken from me? Oh, God! Rather let me *cease to be*, than ever be deprived of *Faith*: And do *you* remember where I first learned to love the *truths* of Christ's Church? Oh, my convent home! Good Friday! and the passion of *Jesus Christ*! When will ye be forgotten? When shall I cease to think of the gifts bestowed upon me in *Mary's Chapel*, on the day that a *God* was crucified for *man*; and when His sacred passion was, as it were, placed before my soul in its *plainest* light. Oh, passion of Jesus Christ! *who* should be devoted to thee? Surely, it is *I*—but how *cold* I am, even at the sight of a *crucifix*. Oh, ma Tante, if I could only have my heart filled with the love of my Saviour! And will you not often *pray* that it may be so? I expect to pass this summer at home." Again, on the 24th of June, Debbie wrote to the same friend from Fairfield. After expressing her earnest desire to go to Montreal to pass the next Christmas, if she could not be allowed to go before, and her fears that her parents would not consent, mentioning also their apprehensions that Helen would desire to enter a convent, she adds: "I presume they think there is no danger of me. I do not think they *need* fear much, for I am sure I have a mission *at home* yet, and in fact I think converts as often find it their vocation to remain in the world as otherwise. I am satisfied to *do what is right*, any way, and if I am to remain where I am, I am willing. If I am to go somewhere else, just as well satisfied. I only ask grace and assistance of Almighty God to do His blessed will, and then I can say, 'Will what Thou pleasest?' Helen's conversion has aroused opposition anew, and I think

my father is more prejudiced than ever against our Holy Faith. I sometimes think if *I* were a *better* Catholic, it might change his ideas some. If the *example* were better, the *effect* might be greater. But oh! poor human nature—*so* liable to err, *so* weak, *so* frail. I fear, I *tremble*, when I think how many things I *do*, that *may* produce a wrong impression upon the minds of those around me! *What* an example mine *ought* to be, and how *far* short it falls! I have just returned from the church. We have had the Blessed Sacrament with us, and every day I can go and lay all my wants before Him, whose home is in yonder humble dwelling, there to receive the graces which He daily distributes to His unworthy creatures. Oh! when *He* condescends to come and make His abode with us, what more *can* we ask? Oh, Blessed Sacrament! what were the world without Thee! what a weary waste, what an endless journey to Heaven it would be! Ah, ma Tante, what a gift of faith was that when *Jesus* taught me to believe in His Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist! Given it was, almost without asking, and why to me? Oh, the goodness of God, the treasures of His Mercy!"

During that month, Helen wrote to the same friend at Yamachiche:

"FAIRFIELD, JUNE 28th, 1856. My Dear Tante—It made me *so* happy to receive those few lines from you; I did not expect them, and was very much surprised when they came. Dear Tante, do you remember what you said to me a short time before I left the convent? I *never, never* could forget it, or the circumstances that led you to say what you did. I do not blame you; you believed as they told you, and I was *too proud* to explain, as long as you did not ask me for an explanation. Did I ever tell you that before I went to the convent, God called me to be a Catholic? or rather He told me that I might find *peace* and *truth* in the bosom of the Catholic Church; and that mother found one day in my room a book that I was reading, and forbade me to finish it. I laid the book

aside, for I dared not disobey; but I never forgot the impression I had received. And when, some time after, she told me that I was to go to the convent, how I wept for joy, and how slowly the time passed till I found myself within the convent walls. Did I ever tell you all this? I think not, and yet it is true. Oh! how often I wished to tell *you* just how I felt, but I *could not*; times without number were the words upon my lips, and one moment more would have saved me untold grief; but the time would pass on, the words were *not* said, and I would turn away *more* unhappy than before; and then at those times I would do something that would most offend my teachers. This is my nature. The last few weeks of my stay there I cared for nothing—for *no one*. I was not loved; no one could understand me, not *even you*, ma Tante, so I cast all feelings aside; only at night, when all else were asleep, would I give way to my feelings. Often would I get up from my bed (regardless of the *rule*, I did not care for *that*,) and go into the chapel and kneel there till I dared stay no longer! then I would go back and weep myself to sleep.

"I used to sit sometimes and watch the moon till I could see it no longer, and wish that I was anywhere but there, for I was not happy. I never went into the garden, but often wanted to go, for I thought that the night air would be so refreshing. I started to go once, but I gave it up for fear of discovery. You are surprised, I know, but this is true. I thought I would tell this to you, my well-beloved Tante, that you might know my faults. You know all I committed except these (and some *more* that I *did not* commit at all!) Is it strange, dear Tante, that when I came home and saw one who loved me, who could read my heart like a *book*, and asked me to love him in return, *is it* strange that I loved him as fervently as I did? and I lived on in that love, forgetting that aught could shadow its brightness; but again, God in His mercy called me, and, dear Tante, I have given up my earthly treasure for a better one in Heaven! I have *now*

found abiding rest; I care not for the love of the world, only as it will please God to bestow it upon me. I do thank the Blessed Virgin that I am a Catholic. Our Holy Mother has interceded for me at the throne of Grace, I know; and now I look to her to obtain the grace for me to love my Saviour more, and will you help me too, my *best* friend, to obtain such a favor. I am watching in patience through the dark hours. I am willing to lay at the low footstool of the Crucified my treasures, every one, and take His cross and bear it through the hours of darkness till the dawn of day, and then I will lay it down and go home to my rest. I thank you, dear Tante' for that sweet picture. My saviour crucified! and my sins the cause of His sufferings! When will the time come when I shall sin no more? Oh, my sweet Tante, I *wish* I could go to Montreal! but I cannot this summer; it does seem as if I could not wait, but would *fly* to you! You know my antipathy to letter-writing; *do* let this be my excuse for this frightful looking letter. I have not practiced much since I left the dear convent. If You can have patience with me, will you, sweet Tante, write again to your loving child,

"HELEN"

Soon after this letter was written, we received our first visit from the beautiful sisters, in our secluded home. We met them in church at St. Albans, on Sunday. They were accompanied by an interesting young friend and convent companion, who was visiting them from Boston, (the "Jennie" of Debbie's letters,) and the three were there, passing a few days at the pleasant home of another convent schoolmate, (Cora," mentioned by Debbie) just out of the village of St. Albans. As we were there with a single carriage, we made arrangements to send a double one to convey them and their young friends to our place in the evening. We have ever remembered that visit as one of the few green spots which have enlivened our solitary journey on the down-hill of life. The music of their clear, sweet voices united in singing the soul-stirring hymns of their "dear, convent home;" the

cheerful conversations, the innocent mirthfulness, the merry pranks of our sparkling and mischief-loving Helen, which were fully entered into by her lovely companions, and enjoyed to the utmost by her more sedate and quiet sister, (who watched her with fond pride, and with more of a mother's than a sister's tenderness;) the visits from some of the young sons of our dear friends, and from our neighbors; the rambles in the woods, the rides on horseback, the drives, the evening pastimes, and above all the fervent, united prayers which closed each day *all, all* are before me now, and even while I am writing of them, I pause to ask myself, is it indeed true that they who were the means of bringing to our solitudes the "angel hours" of that delightful dream, have passed away in the spring-time of their life, and the freshness of their bloom, to adorn the gardens of paradise, and to rejoice in the society of the saints and angels, unto whom their pure spirits were united even in this bleak world!

CHAPTER VI.

IN July, 1856, to the great joy of our dear Debbie, her parents at length consented to her making the long desired visit to Montreal, and even to her remaining a year in Canada to pursue the study of French, if she could make satisfactory arrangements to that end. She was engaged in her preparations for departure, and absorbed in the most joyful anticipations of the pleasures which awaited her in her "convent home," until she set out on the first of September, 1856, upon which day she began the Diary from which I shall give some extracts, as well as from her letters to her family and friends during her absence. It is a matter of deep regret that the sisters destroyed all the letters they had each received, previous to their respective deaths. Had their correspondence with each other been preserved, it would doubtless have added materially to the interest of this biography.

The first entry in the Diary is *September 1st, 1856*: "Left Fairfield this morning for Montreal; arrived in St. Albans, and spent the night at Mr. Hoyt's. Found all well, and in a state of excitement; Willie was going to *Canada*, too *September 2d*—At Rouse's Point I found that some of my convent friends were on the cars. To-morrow! to-morrow!—*September 3d*—Once more in the convent! How *can* I say anything? Three years have flown away since I left it. I say *flown* away, *not* swiftly, though, for time has passed slowly and heavily since I bade adieu to this loved spot. The days, weeks, months and years have brought with them many changes—some happy ones—some sad. When I left I was without the Church

of God, (but *desired* it then.) Dark days were those, but my heart had received impressions within those convent walls—never to be forgotten! Jesus, in His great mercy did not forget me. He has fought the fight for His weak child, and in the excess of His love has placed her in the “Ark of Safety.” All glory to His Holy Name! He has also called one who is near and dear to me, and guided her footsteps into the path of salvation. But, again I am in my convent home! Can it be? *Is* it possible? It is even so. Everything looks the same. I have been to the nun’s chapel. Is it, O, my God, a reality? Shall I not wake and find it a dream? I have closed my eyes, and dreaded to open them for fear. But I am right. Those are the same paintings, the same altars and statues, and even the same venerable old priest who said Mass for us every morning three years ago, is offering up the Adorable Sacrifice. And I have seen all my beloved teachers, among them *ma Tante St. A.*—she who had the greatest care for my salvation; she to whom I owe every thing. If to-day I possess faith—if to-day I am a Catholic, it is to her prayers that I owe it. If I am now a child of Mary, it was she who gave me my first knowledge of the devotion to that sweet Mother. If I was led to inquire for the truth, it was *ma Tante* who gave me the first book; and I have seen her again, my friend—*my more than* friend, *ten thousand times* more than that! She loved my soul because Jesus Christ *died to save it*. Her reward is in Heaven. The day has passed in a continual visit! I have seen every one—been in every room. Not much is changed, nothing but myself.

September 4th—Slept sweetly in my convent home last night; no bad dreams to disturb me, and joyous, happy faces, this morning to meet my gaze. Happy child am I, once more to have returned! The convent walls, which once looked so gray, so dark, so dismal, *now* the sight of them makes my heart leap to my mouth for joy. Happy days! In after-life I will look back and call them blessed.

September 17th—Sunday Vespers—dear convent

home! *This* brings back other days. Can it be I am here once more? I have dreamed it many times, but—awoke—and now it is *reality*! The “Magnificat” is as beautiful as ever, and the “Ave Maris Stella” sounds strangely familiar, but a *trifle sweeter*, and is a *trifle more touching* to the soul, than three years ago.

September 8th—Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin; joyous, happy feast! received Holy Communion in Mary’s chapel this morning. Here in this little chapel, the place dearest to me on earth, I am at last allowed to partake of that Sacred Banquet which Jesus has prepared for His children. I used to watch those who approached to receive His precious Body and Blood, and wondered if the time would ever come, when I also should enjoy the same privilege; and here, too, before the same Altar where I first felt that a *God was really present*. The time *has* come, and I can only say in my heart (for lips cannot speak their meaning), Thanks be to Thee, O, my God! Thou hast remembered me when my soul was lost in darkness; Thou hast shown me the path wherein I should walk, and guided me in the way of salvation.

September 10th—Bade adieu to the dear convent and all the loved ones there, and started this afternoon for the mission convent at St. Eustache with ma Tante St. A., who was now removed from Yamachiche to Eustache.

“ST. EUSTACHE, SEPT. 12TH, 1856—*Friday Evening*. My dear Mother: I am just getting settled at St. Eustache; have written a long letter to Helen, and must tell you how I am pleased with the place, my prospects, etc. St. Eustache is a very pleasant village, about twenty miles from Montreal. It is not on the St. Lawrence, but on a branch of that river. The convent is pleasantly situated, the river passing just back of it, while the church and burial-place is on the right, and a very pretty yard in front. St. A. is with me, and two French nuns. Everything seems for my advantage now. The Sisters are very agree-

able persons; but I must learn French before I can speak much with them. I find the scholars most, if not all, French, and I think I shall not fail to improve. We came to St. Eustache by carriage, and, being only twenty miles, found it quite an agreeable drive. Before leaving Montreal, St. A's father came from Quebec to the city with his daughter, to place her at Villa Maria, and I went with them to that place. St. A. went with us. Her sister is a lovely girl, and has been in the convent since I left. I had a nice visit with them, I assure you. St. A. remembers you well, and father also. As she is with me, I do not think I shall have any trouble in getting along. The school is not large—twenty boarders, and as many day scholars. How are all at home? Grandmother, I suppose, is as usual. The girls I trust, are well, and father is, I presume, as much engaged in political affairs as ever. You must let me hear often from home. You see I have commenced well. I have written twice, and this is the third time in two weeks. How is E—, and her little one? Give my love to her—also to any of my friends who inquire. I am very well, and think I shall be, for this place is very healthy. Write soon. . . . Love to all the girls; tell them to write to me; and father, also

“DEBBIE BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie*.”

We extract from the Diary. “September 21st—Went to confession this morning, and received Holy Communion; a happy day of course, how *could* it be otherwise? Feast of our Lady of seven Dolors, one of my favorite days.”

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, }
ST. EUSTACHE, Oct. 2d, 1856. {

“My own Dear Carrie: Why ask forgiveness of one who loves you so much that she never felt for one moment that she had any thing to forgive? I knew that there must be some good reason for your not writing, and I should have written again, but I knew not where to direct a letter.

“You may be sure I was very much astonished when your letter was brought to me; and when I

found who it was from, I could not refrain from expressing my delight. Its length did not disturb me, dear Carrie; I would not have had it one line shorter. Every word of it was what I could have expected from you. I am not long in answering, you perceive, and I never shall be when you write. Remember this, will you not, my friend?

"I suppose I am indebted to C—s for your letter. Indeed I am very thankful to him. Where was he going when you saw him—to St. Mary's? And Jennie—you did not see her, I suppose. She visited me, it is true; but I fear she could not enjoy her visit much at Fairfield. Have you heard from her?

"So, Carrie dear, you are going South to teach. I presume you will like it, and I wish you all manner of good success. There are worse things, my dear friend, than teaching; and you will find this to be true, I am confident. I am well pleased with it myself, so far at least; and I am well. My health has not been so good since I left Montreal as it is now, and I think it will continue so. I expect to remain a year, and then I presume they will want me at home again.

"I came rather suddenly, you may be sure, and was delighted to see my convent home once more. I reached Montreal at night, and went to a public house. In the morning, before breakfast, I went to the convent. The first person I saw was St. S—. She knew me immediately, even before I did her. The bell was ringing for Mass, and without waiting to see any one else, I threw down my things and hastened to the chapel. I entered on the gallery—Mr. C— was saying Mass at the Altar of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors. The nun's confessor was there as usual, and my own dear St. A— knelt by the confessional. Every thing looked unchanged, and I, alone, was changed. My first thought was to return thanks to Almighty God for His great mercy to me, and the moments I spent there that morning will never be forgotten. When I left the chapel, ma Tante, N—'s room was my first thought: I went

alone, and St. M— and ma Tante stood with their backs toward the door. I could only say: *ma Tante N—!* They knew my voice, and I assure you I could hardly keep back the tears at that meeting! I was weak and sick, and almost worn out with trouble, and my happiness at getting back was too much for me. Search was made immediately for St. A—, and it seemed an hour before she was found. Need I speak of *that* meeting? You know that to her I owe every thing. Yes, indeed! I was overjoyed. I first saw St. E— in one of the halls near the community. She knew me before I came near her. She is the same as ever; more lovely, if possible, for she has been very sick, and is rather pale and thin. I staid in Montréal a week—went to Maria Villa and staid three days. Many of the nuns inquired for you. The Sunday before I came to St Eustache I went up to St. Patrick's to go to Confession. Saw our excellent Father Connelly. He was much surprised to see me, of course, but appeared really delighted. Monday morning I received Holy Communion in the dear little chapel. Of course I was happy. In the same place where, three years ago, I received my first impressions of the truth of Catholicity, I this day received the precious Body and Blood of my Saviour. How could I but feel that I would fain offer myself entirely to Him who offered Himself an entire oblation for me upon the Cross. I know not, Carrie dear, that I can say anything of my happiness that morning. You can imagine better than I can express it to you.

I came to St. Eustache, and now with dear St. A— I am spending some of the happiest days of my life. She was in Montreal yesterday, and I intend visiting there in about two weeks.

I received a letter from Helen this morning. Dear sister! Her health is not good, and I have great fears for her. She is at home. I hope you will pray for us both.

You speak of our trials, Carrie: they are nothing. Every day I feel more and more that my sacrifice

has been simply nothing. I cannot find a thing I have done that is a worthy offering to God. Every day some new favor from Him—every hour some new proof of His love: and, in comparing the benefits I receive from Him every moment of my life, with the little trials I have had, the latter sink into utter insignificance. No, Carrie! speak not of what I have done or borne. Would to God I could do something in return for all the gifts I have received from Him. But no! they are *free gifts*. I cannot repay for the least of them. What love! what love He has had for us! Infinite, indeed, it is! Why is it that our hearts are so insensible of it?

Monday afternoon.—I should have sent this letter before, but I have found so little time to finish it: you will excuse me, I am sure. St. A—e has gone to her collation, and left me in charge of her *juveniles*. Dont you wish you could just step in and see how dignified I look? I think you would be surprised. I should be delighted to see you here, but suppose I may not hope for the pleasure of seeing you at present—perhaps never! Well, there is a world beyond this, and one to which I more often look for pleasure than to this.

You will not forget, will you, Carrie? to pray for
DEBBIE, *Child of Mary*.

"ST. EUSTACHE, OCTOBER 14TH, 1856.—My dear Father: I have now been something over a month in my new situation, and, knowing you would be pleased to hear from me not only by others, but from myself, I thought I would write. I am very well pleased, so far, with my opportunities here. I am getting along finely with my French: in fact I hear but very little else spoken, except on the days I am in my English classes. I understand much more than when I came, and am getting to like the language much. St. Eustache is a pleasant little place, and very healthy; at least I find it so. I am in good health myself, and hope to continue so. I suppose you will be so busy now as hardly to find time to answer your political correspondents, much less *me*. Ev-

every one has a subject upon which they feel more interest than upon any other, and *this* being yours particularly, I am interested also. Give my love to all at home, and tell them to write often. And now I must close. I wish you a glorious victory, and remain your affectionate daughter,

“DEBBIE BARLOW.”

“ST. EUSTACHE, OCT.—My dear Mother: Though I have written home twice this week, I thought I would once more, and I am sure you, as usual, like to hear from me. I wrote to father a few days since, and I presume he has received the letter long ere this reaches you. I am as well as ever, and contented also. I was in Montreal yesterday, and on my return found Helen's letter with the sad intelligence of the dangerous illness of our respected Bishop. I have written to Helen to-day. I am sure she will find that I write often enough, and I trust she will reply. I am happy to hear from her, that she is much better of her cough. I hope all will be well now, if she gets rid of that. How come on affairs in Fairfield? I suppose as usual. I imagine the crowded soirees, parties, etc., you will be apt to have the ensuing season! The *elite*, only, of the town, invited, of course! How is grandmother now? The children, I suppose, are well and good. I will write to Charlotte and Laura in my next letter. They may expect it; and Anna, she has not answered my letter; she *must*. It is time she commenced writing letters. You speak of E—and her babe. Give her my love, and tell her I would be pleased to hear from her. I often think of her, and this morning at my communion, she was not forgotten. Tell her this for me. Do you hear from Madrid, and how and what do you receive from there? I suppose things are as usual. Changes though!—how many changes there have been in three years! I never saw anything like it! Give my love to all. Let me hear often. Your true

“DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie*.”

DIARY.—NOV. 9TH.—Went to confession this morning, again, and received Holy Communion—every

Sunday, this favor from God! I am the one who should be thankful, but I am not; I am ever forgetting. Other things are thought of, but *this* is not.—Happy souls are those who can live one day without showing ingratitude to their God!—Nov. 10TH: Received a letter from home. Helen has been confirmed, and now, I trust, will get along finely with everything.

“ST. EUSTACHE, Nov.—Dear Mother: Your letter and Helen’s also, were received this afternoon, and I thought I would write you a few lines that you might get them Saturday. I am well, perfectly so. I do not think I have felt so well in two years as I do now. I am getting along nicely with my French, and hope to continue to. I trust Helen is getting better, from what you say, and the rest of the family are well. I shall look for my things soon, and will write again before long. Give my love to father, and any of the friends who inquire.”

“Nov. 22d.—My Dear Mother: The box came by express last night, safe and sound. Everything pleased. Receive many, *very* many thanks. I have no need, whatever, of the balsams you spoke of now, for my cough has left me entirely. I have had good scoldings from Sister —, in the French language, and from St. A— in English, and doses of this, that and the other thing, until I am perfectly free from all appearance of a cold. Indeed, it was not exceedingly bad any way, but they have made me put on flannels throughout—last month, some time—and have kept ointment on my chest, until I am sure I shall never need any more. I am not troubled with my former headaches scarcely any; and, in fact, my health is first-rate. I get along nicely at St. Eustache—fare well, and have no trouble whatever.—And so Mr. — is married. I have nothing to say about it, any way. As for Helen, she has the great consolation of knowing she has done something for God; and for her generosity she will have a reward surpassing anything this world can give. I am sure she knows, as every good Catholic should, that

what is lost in this world for God, is gained a thousand-fold in the next. The crown which awaits her, if she is faithful to grace, *we* might envy! I can only imagine what it will be, and my poor imagination is just nothing in this case.

And so you have some additions to society in Fairfield. I am happy to hear it. If Helen's health permits, I trust she will enjoy it. I have written her to-day, and in the same letter I have to send yours. I want them to go to-night. I am as careless as you please about the style of my letters, of late, from the fact that I am generally in a hurry or write in class with my young juveniles around me, studying. There is one here about Anna's age who looks wonderfully like her; and tell Laura there is one who looks, *not* like Janet, but like Eliza Anne, And one I saw in Montreal, at the boarding-school, the exact image of Charlotte; I assure you the *exact likeness* of her! I have everything I want, and when I want more you shall know it. We have had snow, and it is gone again. But winter is close at hand; we have fine weather most of the time. I have been in Montreal once since I came to St. Eustache, and expect to go again when we have good roads. St. A—'s sister is going to visit us soon. I saw her and her father in Montreal. He is a very pleasant gentleman. I have no news to write, and of course my letters have to be short. Give my love to all. Truly your DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie*.—P. S. I hope Helen's health will continue to improve. She must be very careful, and get rid of that cough."

Extract from Diary: "Nov. 30TH—St. Andrew's day, the anniversary of my baptism. *One year ago!* how time has flown since the joyful day of my baptism! I am not aware where it has gone so swiftly; each day some new beauty has been unfolded before me, and every hour I have had new reasons to offer praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God. Another year of my Catholic life has commenced for me; and shall it be as productive of evil as the past one? Shall there be no more good resolutions, no more ef-

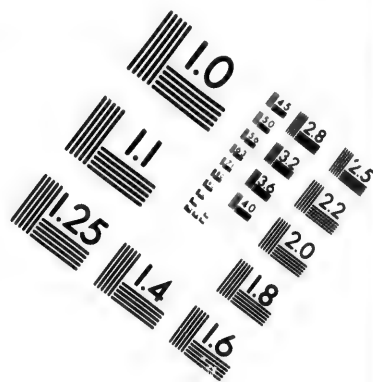
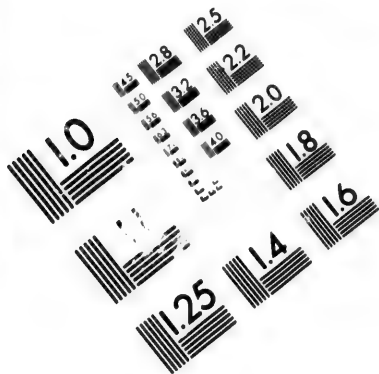
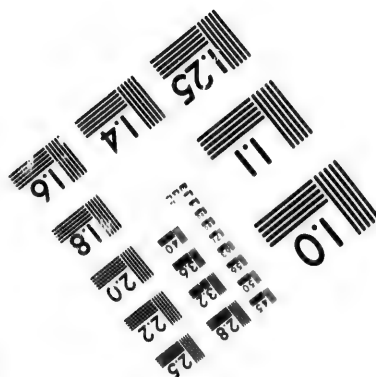
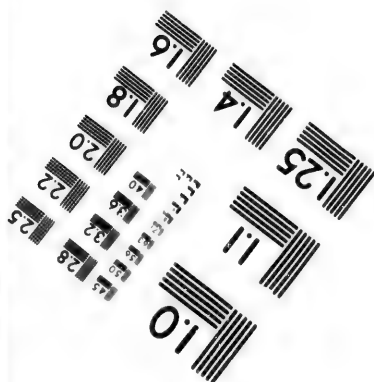
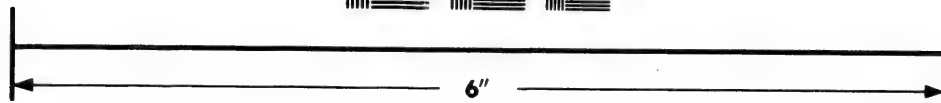
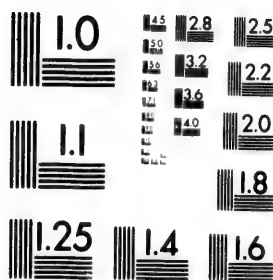
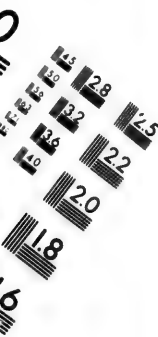


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forts to subdue evil inclinations. no more progress in virtue? Ah, the longer I live, the more I find in *poor I* to fight against; the more I discover how little courage I have for the warfare, and how much, how very much is needed. But, with the help of God I will continue; I will renew my feeble efforts and hope for the best. Have been to Communion this morning, and must commence with fresh courage."

The following is an extract from a letter of Helen's, to the convent friend at St. Eustache, so frequently addressed by her sister. The date does not appear, but it was during the fall that Debbie was there. "Though I may *appear*, I am *not* cold-hearted. You ask me *why* I am not more confiding? I can not tell why, only that it was never my habit to make my feelings known to any one if it could be avoided. I always dreaded it, and even now, because I cannot bring myself to speak to my Confessor of some interior troubles, I at times suffer great agony of mind. Night after night, as I knelt in that dim-lighted chapel, I prayed earnestly that God would direct and strengthen me to do my duty.

"But God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead His own!"

And years have passed, and I am only now as it were, a Catholic. What I have suffered none can ever know but those whose minds have been through just what mine has been. Away down amid the darkness of infidelity, my heart has roved; and what was I thinking of when I could give myself up to such darkness of mind? The love of a human being! This has been my greatest sin. Oh, my God, forgive me!"

I will here give a part of another letter, written by Helen soon after the foregoing one, and to the same person. These letters were probably enclosed to Debbie, as no date appears upon them: "Dearest Tante—I have laid aside everything for a while that I

may write to you. I have had so little time to write lately, that I would hardly have finished my letter to sister, when the mail would come and it would be too late to send one to you. I think I shall be obliged to go again to the Convent to learn to be more orderly in my habits. Everything *I* have to do, always has to be done at the same time. Debbie knows how that is. I think she will smile if she sees this my honest confession. Dearest Tante S—, you could not make me happier than you did when you told me that you loved me so dearly. I have always been too sensitive, but I could not help it. Yes, my dear Tante, you were compelled to *appear* indifferent to me, but what was the cause? *Not* the jealousy of others entirely, but my *own* conduct would not allow you to feel the same towards me that you had done. Well, it is past. You have forgiven and still love your child. No, my dearest Tante, I did not *expect* to be all love, all fervor: but I *did* expect to be able to *give up* all things for *Christ* without a murmur. In the hour of temptation I wrote to you; it is over now; I have yielded. I desire to do His will in all things—even more, to lay down my *life* for Him. Two days after receiving the sacrament of confirmation the first trial came, (you know what news I mean,) and but for the strength I then received, I fear I had been overwhelmed by the waves of sorrow that then flowed in upon my heart; far more strongly than I had dreamed of, did it retain the remembrance of the *past*. Yet I regret it not. You *know*, my own Tante, your child is *sincere*. I thank God that He has granted me this, that I may glorify Him by suffering. And now, dear and sweet Tante, write me soon (as I requested Debbie) a long good letter, as you generally do; it makes me *better*. I *like* your way of telling me things, dear, dear Tante! I have written in haste. Excuse the imperfections of this letter. Your affectionate and grateful child,

“HELEN.”

Extract from Debbie's journal: “MONTREAL, DEC. 6th—Went to Communion this morning, in the little

chapel at the boarding-school. This is one of the great pleasures I have when I come to Montreal, and it should be, I am sure. Why that spot is dearer than others, I do not know; it is the *home of the heart* for me, and must *ever* be. Time may pass with its many changes, but there will be none for me as regards that little Oratory of Mary.

DEC. 8TH—Feast of the Immaculate Conception and the Anniversary of my First Communion. The weather not quite as fine as last year at this time. I have a slight remembrance of my joyous day in St. Albans, the 8th of December, 1855. Probably my memory will be good *all my life* on that subject.

“DEC. 16TH—I received a letter, telling of the desire of one very near and dear to me, to be confirmed when the bishop visited Fairfield. Poor dear one! her desire will some time be gratified. I must write a few lines to Anna also, who has come to the happy conclusion of becoming a Catholic. What glorious news! *What a happiness* if the time does come when I shall see them within the ‘Ark of Safety!’ God grant that it may be so! Hope on, hope ever my soul, for He is all goodness.”

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION N. D. }
ST. EUSTACHE, DEC.—, 1856. }

“My dear Mother: Your last letter I should have answered in Helen’s, but at that moment I had not time except to finish hers. I am most happy to hear that you are all well, and hope this may long continue. . . . I went to Montreal week before last with St. A. Had *ten minutes* to dress in, you can imagine the *hurry*; got to Villa Maria in the evening, aroused the poor nuns from their devotions in the chapel by a *tremendous* knocking at the entrance, and ringing of the bell. We were so muffled up in cloaks, hoods, etc., that no one knew us at first. Sister M—, who came to the door, scanned us from head to foot before admitting such *stragglers*, and finally recognized us, Ma Tante N— was there, and she thought it must be some one in the greatest distress imaginable.

“While at the convent I had the pleasure of meet-

ing many old friends among boarders, and some others. The convent building narrowly escaped being destroyed by fire last week. My letter to Helen contains some of the details, though I have not heard much. How does Fairfield progress since there are some new comers and some departures? Just remember me to all who may inquire. When I go home I suppose I shall find some new faces—some old ones gone. How is grandmother now? I suppose about the same. You spoke of my going home in your last letter. There is no vacation at present, and I could not leave without breaking in upon the duties of the school. They expect me to stay until July, and I desire to. If I went home before that time I should wish to return to finish the year, and I think, for only a few days, it would be foolish to go. I am doing well, and I had better go on. My love to all. I remain as ever, your affectionate daughter,

“DEBBIE BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie.*”

The following note to her sister Laura, appears to have been enclosed in the same envelope with the foregoing letter: “My dear little Sister: Your note was received with the greatest happiness. I am glad you are commencing to write letters. You should continue. Write to me as often as you can. Your picture pleased you. I am glad of it. I think it very nice myself. I sent as pretty ones as I could find in Montreal at the time. So you think I am getting *wild* in the convent. *Wild in my old age!* Fie, Laura! I am growing steady. I *must* be, for my station requires it. Teacher! I imagine you would laugh to see me. Ma Tante St. A— says I cannot scold; when she wants to have a hearty laugh she contrives some way to hear me scold my children. I dress them sometimes with *dunce caps* when Mr. G—, the parish priest, is coming to hear the marks read, and let *him* do the *lecturing*. Good way. I must here close. Good bye!

“DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*”

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, }
ST. EUSTACHE, DEC., 1856. }

“My own dear L—e: Again I am addressing you, and why? I have written before and received no answers; but this afternoon my old friends have one by one been in my mind, and among them not the least was L—. Again and again have I attempted to forget the past. It keeps coming this day and I find the tears falling thick and fast while I am busy with my class. The Past, why must it haunt me so? God only knows how I sometimes strive to drive all memories from me! They are too sad. No one understands me; and to whom is my heart so open as to one who was the dearest friend of earlier years? Oh L— can it be you have forgotten? Else why this estrangement? Can you so soon cease to think of one who has been your warmest friend? Are you mistaken in her? Did she not prove to be what you once thought she was; have you found others whose thoughts and feelings were more congenial with yours? I ask you once more L— the cause of this change; you must answer me. You are the last of my early friends; the others are gone and I begin to think truly “Friendship is a marvel among men!” I have lost more friends in the past few years than I would once have thought possible. So much to teach me humility. If you go as the others have, I may say “it is the last.” I form few strong attachments: but it is like taking my life to give up those who have once been dear to me. I am still the same, my dear friend, towards you, and love you as fondly as you will ever be loved by any one. My constant prayer is that you may be happy; and, though I am far from you in the quiet of a convent, you are often thought of. I dread the thought that our friendship must end, after its long continuance. Will you not write once more—and most assuredly wherever you may be, you will be answered immediately. If I hear from you no more, I promise you will ever be remembered in my prayers. And now good bye! God bless you, L—, and preserve

you from all sorrow. May your life here be happy, and your soul eternally blest. Seek first of all the kingdom of Heaven, and every thing else shall be added unto you. Yours truly and forever,

"MARY DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*"

(*To the same.*)

"CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, }
ST. EUSTACHE, DEC. 25, 1856. }

"My Dear L——e :

"Your letter was received on Wednesday last, and I had just sent one to Burlington for you, which you will probably receive before you do this, and perhaps be surprised at the tone in which it is written. Do not think too much of it. I had not heard from you for so long a period, that I began to think you had departed from this life, or from your former line of conduct. I am most happy to find you are still the same L——, and after long years have passed we will still be as warm and true friends as ever, even though we may have met and parted for the last time on earth.

You say you are going to get interested in the pleasures of Chicago. Very well, enjoy yourself, but I entreat you sometimes to think of things more lasting and more important. These may be pleasing for a time and the senses be indulged as they desire, but like every thing on this earth they will pass away and leave the heart unsatisfied. Do not think I wish to preach you a sermon, but I do not love you with a merely human affection ; I love your soul. I do not wish to trouble you with my lectures, and would not have you think I practise half as much as I ought, that which I admire so much in others. But I cannot resist the strong desire I have of saying a few words to my L—— occasionally. They may not be welcome, but forgive me if I err. I fear sometimes for you. Your heart is gay, and your disposition one that requires pleasure to make you happy, and for this reason I am often led to fear that you will forget things of much greater moment. You know, as well as I, that life is not long at the longest, and we know not the day nor the hour when we shall be

called. How often we hear of a person being taken suddenly from the world without any warning, and why should we imagine we shall be more fortunate. Death comes, and then follows the judgment. Is this not enough to make us reflect upon the state of our souls? It is not hard to think of these things, and I trust my dearest friend, you will not forget them entirely. If you knew how much depended upon life here, you would not neglect to seek something which will render us happy hereafter. Do not smile at what I have written. Ask yourself the question, 'Is it not true?' and do not pass it by unheeded. Be sure you are not forgotten, and I trust one day to see my *little friend* what I have so often prayed she might be.

And so at last you are with your father in Chicago, I hope you will find a happy home there, and that you health will be much improved. If you are 'growing steady in your old age,' St. A—says I am 'growing ferocious!' You see what a reputation I am getting. She says she will expect you when you have the great misfortune you speak of. She sends much love and this picture to you. She is all kindness to me and you may imagine I love her more and more every day. I am most happy to be with her, and enjoy myself just as well as ever. I hear from Helen often. Her health is not good, neither is Sister Anna's. Perhaps I wrote you that Mr. A— was married the very day on which Helen was confirmed. E—, his sister has named her little daughter Helen, for my sister, and Amanda for that much loved Miss A— of whom you have so often heard us speak."....

I now return to the diary: "JANUARY 1ST, 1857. NEW YEAR'S DAY—A new year just commencing; one just past; and all its joys and sorrows, pleasures and pains, all its changes are buried in the great tomb of the past! How many hearts have been filled with new joys in the course of the year which has just closed? how many have been broken? how many have seen the dearest hopes blasted, the fondest

anticipations disappointed? how many have *gained* Heaven? how many *have lost it*? and now all is over! Eighteen hundred and fifty-six will be heard of no more, except in calling up scenes of joy or sorrow, and in weeping over the irrevocable past. And where are its moments, hours, days and months? Hard is this to answer; we can only know it has flown as others have, as others will. Our object should be to employ the coming time, as we now wish we had the past. Another year is opening upon our poor earth. Would to God it might bring with it less sorrow, less sin; and my heart is whispering, 'Do thy share, try and fulfill thy duties and there will be a little less.' Once more, here are good resolutions. How long will they last? No matter, I can keep trying; and if there is no good comes of them, I will not have to say I did not make an effort. A long year to look forward to; I trust some one will pray for me that it may not be altogether lost."

"CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, ST EUSTACHE'
JANUARY 7TH, 1857—My dear Mother: Your long letter contained much pleasing news. I have but a few moments more to write before sending my letter to Helen. I am happy to hear you are all so well, and enjoying yourselves so much. I wish you a happy New Year, and all at home. My birthday is past, and I enjoyed it very well here in St. Eustache. It being Sunday, I attended church morning and evening. Helen will tell you of the feast the day before. I am now nineteen! Getting along wonderfully in years; I can hardly realize (time goes so swiftly,) that I am *somewhat advanced in years*. However, it is so. The Misses B—you speak of, I think I have seen one of them once. I have heard them, very highly spoken of by Mrs. S——, as well as their brother. Give my love to father; tell him I wish him a very happy New Year, and the greatest blessings with it. Give my love also to all my friends. Tell E——my letter was written some time ago, and I intended to send it, but forgot it. I shall write again soon and a longer letter, but it is growing dark and I

must stop now. St. A— sends her best wishes for the year. Yours affectionately,

“DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*”

Diary: “SUNDAY. JAN. 11TH, 1857. Have attended church as usual; there is little need of saying this. Since I am a *Catholic*, I believe I *generally* go to church on *Sundays*—somewhat different from old times, when I used to do as I chose about such matters. ‘A change came o’er the spirit of my dream,’ or I might say, I *awoke* from my *slumbers*, and now I am under blessed obedience, thank God.”

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, ST. EUSTACHE, JAN. 18TH, 1857--My dear Mother: Your letters from home were received with *true* pleasure yesterday. I was sorry to hear that you had been suffering from one of your headaches, but I trust you are now much better. No other bad news was to be found in the five short notes, unless the loss of our State House, by fire, be mentioned. I had not heard of it before your note arrived. And now, for news at home. I suppose you are making some changes from what you say. I shall see when I get home. Of course, I am interested in them all. Father sent me word he had bought a new span of horses. It will give you all a great deal of pleasure, I am sure; if I am not mistaken you will make good use of them. Anna wrote me that she and Helen were going to Fairfax, to spend a week at Mr. B—’s, of course. I was most happy to hear that their coughs were so much better, and hope they will continue so. Have you had much company this winter? I imagine Fairfield quite pleasant about these days. You have had some pleasant additions to your society, too. Some of you asked how I spent Christmas. I send the letter I wrote to Helen at the time, and did not send it for some reason now forgotten. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves. The girls wrote to me about their presents, and when I go to Montreal I will look for mine to them. I do not know how soon that will be. I may go in to attend a ceremony some time this month; if not, then probably not until Holy Week.

I find a great deal of pleasure in going to the city but I am troubled greatly with sleigh-sickness, when I ride this winter. . . . Ma Tante S— is never any other way then pleasant. They laugh at us for being always together. . . . The other nun here says we save her a great deal of trouble, for she needs never ask but one what she will have, or what she would like. What one has the other must have; what one likes the other likes also. I am very well. Give my love to father; tell him I am happy to hear of his *improvements*; hope he is in good health. Let me hear soon and often. Your affectionate daughter,

“DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie*.”

This note to her sister Charlotte accompanied the foregoing letter.

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION—My dear little Charlotte: Your letter gave me the greatest pleasure. I wish you would write often. I heard from mother that you could write very well, before your letter arrived, and you must practice. I am glad your pictures pleased you; and your New Year's present from father and mother. You could not have had a nicer one, in your sister Debbie's estimation. I cannot tell you much which will interest you. Only know you are often thought of by me every day, *every day*; and when I see you next summer, I will tell you all about my school, my friends, and my adventures at St. Eustache. Ma Tante St. A— sends love.

“Yours, truly, “DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie*.”

“P. S.— I suppose you have fine drives this winter and high times. Do you grow as fast as ever? If so you will be quite out of my remembrance.”

“ST. EUSTACHE, JAN. 19TH, 1857.

“Beloved L——: I lose no time in answering your welcome letter. I was perfectly delighted to hear you were so happy, so contented in your new home and I wish you may ever continue to be so. You are with those you love most on earth, and you cannot be otherwise than happy. I know you will not forget those who love you and are far, far away.

Your letter gave me pleasure in many ways.

Your father is again married. This is good news, for I think my L—— will be happier for many reasons. I think of you often; yes, every day, and would desire to see you, but this is fruitless at least for a long time. I can hardly realize that you are in the distant West, and I so far from you. Why are we separated? but is not this life and its changes—the separation of friends which is ever taking place here?

I am still happy in St. Eustache, as contented as possible. Nothing to trouble me much. My class numbers eighteen and I have no trouble whatever with them. I have letters from home every week and from Sister Catherine often. I am happy to assure you that Helen's cough is better. I think Mr. A——'s marriage will not affect her much. I know she does not regret the course she took. Nature is nature in every case, and she must sometimes have felt its power, but not to regret. For my own part, I think God has had His designs in this matter and destines her for something higher and better. . .

Diary: "FEB. 8TH, 1857.—This is a memorable day for me. Just four years ago this morning, I saw for the first time *a convent*. Many changes in many things since that time. A real God-send being sent to Montreal! When shall I be able to appreciate, as I should, the privileges I received there? FEB. 9TH —Four years ago, I entered as a scholar the convent at Montreal. How changed is every thing since then! I look back and wonder at my sentiments. I think of my first night there, and my first visit to a Catholic chapel. How well I remember the hymns, sung to the Blessed Virgin, the statues and paintings, altars and crucifixes that horrified me so much. How contented I felt though, in spite of my attempts to look on the dark side of every thing. How calm were those first hours in my convent home. I knew not why my heart could not find any thing to dislike although it tried. Trouble only came when *doubts* rushed like torrents upon me; doubts of my safety, the safety of my soul. What was I doing to gain

Heaven? Was I in darkness, or in light? Alas! I found myself going on like one blind without a guide! without a thought of the precipice, towards which I was hastening. But these things have made that spot dearer than life to me. There I found that precious treasure, without which time is long, life is all dreariness and eternity is misery without a *hope* of change.

"ST. EUSTACHE, FEB. 17TH, 1857.

"My Dear Mother:—I received your letter with the intelligence of your sickness; I need not say that I am most happy to know that you are so far recovered. I hope you will continue as well as you are at present. Our winter has been very severe. We expect to go to Montreal in about two weeks, if the weather is not too bad—when we have more snow to give us some sleighing. Helen has, I suppose, returned from Fairfax; has had a pleasant time undoubtedly, and Anna also. I am glad you find the newcomers so pleasant, and hope they will remain in Fairfield. I suppose you know L—J— has gone to Chicago. Her father is again married. She wrote me a few days ago; is very well contented, and likes the city so far as she knows anything of it. She sent her love to you all. Your girls have left you—whom have you now, and how do you like them? Grandmother is failing you say; I suppose she does not leave her room. Has father returned? I imagine he is gone as much as ever. Give my love to him. I should be most happy to receive the paper he spoke of—hope it will come. My love to E—, and kiss her babe for me. Remember me to A—S—, and any one who may inquire. I remain, as ever, your affectionate daughter,

"DEBBIE S. BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie*."

"CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, N. D., }
ST. EUSTACHE, FEB. 24TH, 1857. }

"My very dear Carrie: Your long and very welcome letter has just been received and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of answering this very afternoon. I could not define the cause of your long silence but

now I know. Truly my dear Caro, you are lonely, but be brave and I trust it will not last too long. You are at last in your Southern home. I regret exceedingly that you are deprived the pleasure of the consolations of our holy religion. I know this must be to you a *real* trial, one which you must feel sorely after having been so long in a convent. But knowing, as you do, that it is all for the best, I am sure you will be very patient and therefore your loneliness will be somewhat mitigated.

You did not tell me how long you had been in your present situation. I imagine you are not far from Washington. How is it?

Now, my dear friend, I must not write you a sober letter; no, I will not. You have enough to make you sad already. I must try to make you cheerful at least while you are reading my long letter, for such I intend to make it, even if I have to fill up with all kinds of nonsense. I think you will smile at my intention.

You and I are now in the same capacity, *teachers*, in rather different places, however; I am the favored one as regards pleasure—just now, at least—I must tell you how I am situated. First of all, I am with St. A——e, and that would be *enough*, even *in a wilderness*—at St. Eustache, a village about twenty miles from Montreal. I will not attempt to give you an idea of the place, people, &c., for I do not see a great deal of either, preferring to remain in the house most of the time. We have not many pupils, I have but sixteen in English and seven in music. I am nicely situated you see. There are but two nuns here now, ma Tante the N—— and St. A——e. They are both just as kind as they can be, and I assure you I could not find in the wide world any one who would feel for me what the latter does. So you perceive I am with pleasant persons. My time is spent as follows: Arise at half past five o'clock, go to Mass at six; breakfast at half past six. At seven I go to the little chapel where we have the happiness of having the Blessed Sacrament, and after a little

visit, repair to the class. At eight o'clock, on days of English class, I commence hearing the recitations. At ten St. A——e comes for the translations, and at eleven, lecture for a quarter of an hour. Dinner, visit to the Blessed Sacrament and recreation until one P. M. I then have my class again for half an hour, and from that time until four for my own studies. Half an hour lecture. I then give my French lessons. Prayers at quarter past five, tea at six, and recreation until eight; visit again to the chapel, and to bed. You see how my time passes; very much like our convent days in Montreal. I little thought one year ago I should be here now enjoying so many privileges, so many happy days. I have been to Montreal several times and intend to go again next week, will write you an account of my visit in my next letter. At New years, Mary L——n and a sister of St. A——e, came and spent a week with us. You may be sure we had gay times. Since that time I have been as grave as a Presbyterian deacon. St. A——e accuses me of singing *Methodist hymns*, and I think she suspects I am going back to *old habits*. Now what do you think of these things? But to return—I was speaking of our visitors. Rev. Mr. Comte has called to see us twice lately—is just the same as ever—gave pictures to all the children, a conge, his blessing, &c., He made me think of old times. These are all I have seen at St. Eustache whom you know.

I have not heard from Sister Helen directly for some weeks. Heard from mother last week that Helen's health is greatly improved, and I think she is quite herself this winter. My second sister, Anna, is going to become a Catholic. Pray for her I beg of you for I fear she will have her share of trouble. I am daily expecting to hear about it from Helen. I need not tell you how delighted I am at the thought of another sister a Catholic.

I suppose you hear from Burlington sometimes, I have no news from there now, my only correspondent having left for Chicago—Miss J——s of whom you

have heard me speak. From St. Albans I hear nothing. I had a letter from Jennie last week. Has she written to you?

I suppose Washington is gay enough just now. The inauguration of the new President so near at hand. You will probably hear accounts of the festivities, Uncle and Aunt S—— are there.

And now I hope you will tell me how you get along teaching. Are you in a Catholic family? Do you feel less lonely than you did? I shall think of you very very often, my dear Carrie, and now, knowing where you are, will write often. Lent is at hand, and in all the exercises of these holy days you will not be forgotten. No; I will think and pray for you. You will write soon—will you not—and tell me about your health and all particulars of your present position. I hope to see you the coming summer, if not in Canada, certainly in Vermont.

And now, my Carrie, good bye! I love you as ever. I feel for you in your loneliness. I know what it is to be sad. I will pray for you as fervently as I am able. That is a poor promise for my prayers are unworthy ones, but offered for you they may be heard. I am happy to think you remember me after four years separation. May we still continue warm friends. Although far from each other, we can meet in spirit in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Let that be our resort. Oh, blessed consolation!

Here are kisses for you, and a good night from your sincere and affectionate friend,

“DEBBIE M. BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie.*”

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, N. D., }

ST. EUSTACHE, MARCH, 1st 1857. }

“My beloved L—e: I am not waiting so long as you did, my friend, to answer your letter, though you were not very tardy. Our correspondence seems to continue now as in other days, and it might still be said, “L—e J——s and Debbie Barlow!” I trust it may ever be the same.

“You speak of the joyous times we have seen in old Vermont. I remember them well. Yes! many hap-

py days I have seen there and many sad ones too. God alone knows what the latter have been. I am growing to be myself again, L—e, you will not regret to hear this will you?

"They say I am getting gay. If so, I am getting sick of the world. I have put my trust in its friendship and have learned by experience, young as I am, how false and deceitful it is, and I hope I shall profit by the lesson. I have sought happiness in its pleasures, and have seen how shallow is the joy arising from them. I have given them up; have formed resolutions against them. And now, what think you of this? If you hear of my engaging in any of those things, you may be sure I am obliged to, on account of my position towards others, and not through my love for them. I am now more peaceful and happy in my own mind than I have been for a long time, and I think the cause of this is the *good design* I have in my heart.

"I am hearing often from home now. I think they are more reconciled to things than they have been; however, I do not know how long it may last. You know how it has been and I will say no more. Helen is pretty well, and, I think, bears her trials very courageously. Do you know that the father of those young B—s who graduated at Burlington, is now the Presbyterian minister at Fairfield. Of course Helen has called upon the young ladies. There are two of them.

"I hear nothing from Burlington or Highgate. In fact my friends with whom I correspond are few. I will mention them. Your own dear self, Carrie G—d, of whom you have often heard me speak. She is now in Maryland teaching. Jennie S—e. My kind and much esteemed Father Reardon, and Sister Catherine who is now in London, C. W. These are all except my letters from home, you see some have dropped off."

"MARCH 8TH—My Dear Mother—Your letter and Helen's were received yesterday, and as usual, this afternoon, after Vespers, I have time to answer them,

I am glad to hear you are so much better. We are having beautiful weather, after a series of stormy days. I have had a cold, but have now recovered. Just a few days before Lent commenced, the nuns made me take a good dose of *castor oil*, and I find it has been a benefit to me; I imagine they wish me to *eat more than usual* during the *fast days*. I am quite well now, and every thing goes on nicely. I went to Montreal last week. I shall not go again until the snow goes off, for I was terribly sleigh-sick, both going and coming home. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. S— of St. Albans, in the city. I had been out doing a little shopping for Ma Tante St. A—, and when returning, met him on the side-walk. He said he saw father a few days before. He knew me, and *of course* I knew him. Probably he has seen some of you since, and told you. I only stayed at Montreal one night; had but very little time there, and felt most of that as I do after being on a boat. I am glad to hear you are enjoying yourselves this winter. Helen seems to be perfectly well. Of this I am not sorry to hear, and she seems to be enjoying the winter finely. Is A— G— yet married? I supposed she was to have been, long ago. Every thing goes on the same as ever at the missions. St. A— is just as good and kind as ever, and takes care of me well. Sister — is always pleasant, and says she shall learn to speak English, *quarrelling with me!* She does not understand our language very well. It is some time since I heard from the younger members of our family, Anna, Laura and Charlotte. Tell them they must write to me."

About the time this letter was written, we were favored with a visit from dear Helen. Her presence was always like a sunbeam in our shadowed home; she was so brilliant and mirthful. How dearly we loved the graceful and almost pensive serenity of our contemplative Debbie, and the energetic, active earnestness of the practical Anna, will be known only when the secrets of all hearts are revealed; but Helen, our sweet Helen, nestled into our home in the

wilderness like a bird that was native there, filling the echoing forests with the melody of her angelic songs, and enlivening every scene with the gayety of her innocent heart. Dear to our hearts as are the memories of all these charming sisters, we still linger upon those connected with the "first flown" of the three, with tender emotions gushing up from abysses, the depths of which these alone have the power to stir, while we exclaim, "Oh, *Helen* was our beautiful, our lovely, and our best beloved one!"

"ST. EUSTACHE, MARCH 15: My Dear Mother—My things came yesterday by express. Your taste was very good in selecting them, and all suited. Many, *many* thanks for all. I wrote you a few days since, and write now merely to acknowledge the reception of the box. . . . I hope you will excuse my haste. I received several newspapers with the box, and was right glad to get them." . . . The following letter from Helen, to a very dear Aunt, was written about this time.

"FAIRFIELD, MARCH 25TH, 1857: My Dear Aunt—Pardon my long silence. I really cannot give any good reason for not writing before, only that I have felt so little inclined to write. All my correspondents have been neglected in the same way, and they have good reason to complain. Why did you think, my dear Aunt, that I was not happy? Surely *I am*. I think I can safely say that not a happier heart beats in human breast than mine; it was *not* so *once*. I have known what it was to be unhappy. For long years I sighed for happiness, and could not find it. There was an aching void in my heart that even the knowledge that I was beloved by a human being like myself, could not fill; and what will fill the human heart with pleasure like the knowledge of being beloved? But it was not human love I sighed for, but the love of my God! I now have found the abiding rest for which I sighed so long, and I am happy, *happy*. Earth hardly satisfies my longing desires; only in Heaven where *faith* is turned to *sight*, can I be fully satisfied. Oh! what a blessed thing it is to

know that our sins are washed away in the all-atoning Blood of our Redeemer! Oh that we were not bound down to earth by this load of flesh, but could soar far above it—and the sins that every day leave a stain upon our robe of baptismal innocence—and sing the praises of our Redeemer, where sin can no more cloud our visions of his brightness! The heart can not but be impatient, yet it is better for us to remain for a while, that God may be glorified in us, for we will conquer Satan, and God shall have the glory. Trials are sent to perfect us—are they not, Auntie? Oh! that more might be sent me, for this world gives me none, and I shall be detained long, very long, if no fire is sent to purify me here. Sometimes I am weary struggling against temptations, and then I know God is displeased with me; therefore He deems me not worthy of those trials He sends to those He loves.”

“CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, N. D., }
ST. EUSTACHE, MARCH, 29TH, 1857. } ”

“My Dear Carrie: I was glad to hear from your last that you once more enjoy some of the privileges you had so recently lost. I hope and pray that this may be of long continuance for, I am sure, to be deprived of those things is one of the greatest trials we can meet. I could not fail to congratulate you on this, the first thing.

“You speak of being in Washington at the Inauguration. So you can occasionally get out of your retreat? I am glad of this, for my imagination has pictured you in rather a lonely place. I was sorry you did not see more of Mrs. S——, as I think you would have found her very pleasant, and I am sure she would have been very happy to have seen you.

“You requested a few details of my visit to Montreal. I cannot say that I saw many persons of your acquaintance. I was very busy all the time—shopping almost every minute—and if you find that as disagreeable as I do, you will know how little I enjoyed it. I spent the first night at Maria Villa and

saw St. G——l and St. G——e the only ones of your former teachers who are there. They inquired particularly how you were situated, and sent their love to you. I saw Miss K—. She is very well and perfectly contented. At the city I saw St. J—e and St. F—e your former teachers. How many changes in a few short years. I do not see one familiar face among the boarders, none we knew except Mary L—n and I think you knew Louisa M—n. She is at Maria Villa. As I have said, I was in the streets most of the time. I saw Father Conolly, went to Confession to him. He is just as good and kind as ever. He was making great preparations for the Feast of St. Patrick when I saw him. Ma Tante St. A—e has told you all the news of your former companions in her letter. I find, notwithstanding the changes at the boarding school, that the convent is *ever* the *same*. I cried on leaving it the last time. It was like leaving a dear and cherished home; I felt sad and down-hearted, and when I think I have to bid them good bye again, I have the same sentiments. No matter where I may be, I shall ever feel that there is no spot on earth so dear. And well I may feel this. My happiness is *all* the result of six months sojourn in the Convent of the Congregation, N. D. Why should I not love it? I need not speak of this, my dear Carrie, to you who know how I cherish the memory of those days. I am still as happy as ever at St. Eustache.

"We are now in Passion Week. Remember me sometimes, Carrie, and be assured you will not be forgotten. I know you will grant this request, for I trust I am often thought of in your prayers, in fact you have promised to perform this act of charity for me."

We return to the Diary at St. Eustache :

"*April 9th*, Holy Thursday : went to High Mass, and received Holy Communion. At three o'clock we went to visit the Blessed Sacrament, and remained an hour. The Repository looks very well. In the evening we went again at about six o'clock, to secure

good seats for the evening prayers. We were directly in front of the Altar, and had arrived long enough before the time appointed to have a full half hour, quiet und undisturbed. The stillness, the silent few who were paying their adorations to Jesus in His Sacrament of Love—the dim light of the tapers, and the thought that He was there *really*, not in imagination, but *truly* present, listening to the petitions of His creatures, made me feel that all of this earth was little worth our love, and that the *most* we could do for Him was *nothing* in comparison with His great, unlimited love for us: and *I*, who should be, the whole day and every day, doing something in return for His graces, often forget Him! At eleven o'clock, ma Tante St. A—awoke me, as I had requested, and we went to the chapel to remain an hour, in commemoration of our Saviour's agony in the garden—the first time I have ever passed that hour before the Blessed Sacrament."

"*April 10th.* Good Friday! A day which is ever dearer to me than any other of the year *can* be!—one in which I love to spend hours in thinking of the past, in bringing to mind my first thoughts on entering a Catholic chapel on that day, four years ago. Why *speak* of it now? *Meditation* is more suited to my feelings than *words*, at this time!"

"CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, }
ST. EUSSTACHE, APRIL 12, 1857. }

"My dear Father: Your letter was received yesterday, and I need not say that it gave me the greatest imaginable pleasure. It was almost *too good* for *Lent*, but to have left it until to-day would have been too great a sacrifice. I was not strong enough for that, and it was read and re-read with as much delight as if it had been one of the most joyous feasts of the year, instead of Holy Saturday. To-day I could not fail to answer it. Your letter was unexpected, therefore it gave me a great surprise. Your account of your stay in Washington was very interesting. I noticed in particular what you said in regard to your visit at Judge Douglas's. I heard he

had married a young Catholic lady; I am glad you found her so interesting. Is Uncle — still in Washington? I heard of him in Washington, and Aunt — with him, about the time of the Inauguration. I have heard of late a little of the public affairs at home, for the St. Albans *Messenger* has arrived regularly for the last few weeks. I had the pleasure of reading the Inaugural Address of Mr. Buchanan, and a description of the 4th of March at the Capitol, in a French paper published in Montreal.

"You ask how I am, how I like, etc. My health is good; I have never been better. The nuns here are two excellent persons. St. A — you knew long ago, at least by reputation. I am sure I never could have found persons more kind than they are. We do not often go out to call, but we have visits from the first families of the parish; and there is some *very* good society here, I assure you. I find the French exceedingly pleasant people, and very polite — great talkers, and consequently good company; much gayer than the Americans, but seem to have less stability. Upon the whole I like them extremely well. But to return to my subject: Speaking of the nuns here, I find the situation pleasant in every respect, and if things continue the same after vacation, I would like to return in September, since you desire I should continue French, and I desire it myself also. At present I understand all of common conversation, and nearly all I read. St. A — says I am a little proud about *speaking*, before her at least, for she speaks both language perfectly well. However, the other Sister here speaks nothing but French. *Afternoon:* I have returned from church, and think I shall have time, before Vespers, to finish my letter. To-day is the first time it has looked quite as though Spring had come. We have had a strange winter; so changeable: not so much more severe than others, but decidedly *freaky*. Give my love to mother, and all at home. I hope to have the pleasure of hearing again from you. My father could not give me greater joy. And now, until I see you, remember

that my thoughts are often with you: not a day, no, perhaps not an hour, that my best wishes are not spoken, or, at least, mentally desired for your welfare.— If I cannot *do* any thing in return for your solicitude for me in *one* way, perhaps I can in *another*. Once more, good-bye. . . . Your affectionate child,

“DEBBIE S. BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie*.”

“CONGREGATION OF NOTRE DAME, }
ST. EUSTACHE, APRIL 14, 1857. } ”

“My dear Mother: Your letter has just been received, and I have only to say in reply to your questions: *That gentleman* and myself are no *more* than *friends*, and there has never been any engagement existing. Now I have told you this many times before, and tell you again, that this may end the matter! I am not one of the persons who trouble themselves *over* and *above* much about such matters: this you must know. Whether I shall ever be engaged to any one is another question which time will solve. If I never am, you may rest assured I shall live just as long, and be quite as well contented. You *must* know, in seeing your daughters Catholics, that their chances are few, so far as the prospects of this world are concerned; but do not imagine they are discouraged at this. Far from it! When I became a member of the Catholic Church I did not lose, I gained. I lost nothing, not even if all the fondest pleasures of life were sacrificed: I gained what this world can never give!—what our holy religion alone can bestow!—Yes, I gained, I repeat it, and in becoming one of the children of the Church of Christ, I counted every thing in this world as mere nothing, compared with the privileges I enjoy as a Catholic Christian! So do not fear for me! I am not sorry for anything I have done, or have had to do. You know the Catholic Church *forbids* marriage with Protestants, and I am most happy to think she does. Protestants abhor our religion, and so we are equal. You seem to think that I am needed at home: I shall follow the will of God, which seems to demand I should spend a portion of my life there, at any rate. Do not give yourself fur-

ther trouble. I am a reasonable person, and if I live and die an '*old maid*' at Fairfield, I shall not care. I expect a long time will see me there."

"CONGREGATION OF NOTRE DAME, }
ST. EUSTACHE, APRIL 17, 1857. }

"My Dear Mother: I received your letter containing the sad intelligence of grandmother's death. I could not feel otherwise than that it was better so, since she has been so long failing, and her mind so much impaired. Still, let *Death* come when it will, and where it may, it is always sad. It gives to each one a time for reflection, and a new impulse to the soul to prepare and be always ready, for even if we reach an old age, still we must at last yield to *Death* and go: earth is not our abiding-place! I hope father reached home in time for the funeral—did he? At least aunts D—and L—reached home before her death. I am very glad of it, especially on your account. I shall look for a letter soon, giving more of the particulars. Father wrote me while in Washington, and I have answered his letter, which was received on Holy Saturday. He will regret his absence, I am sure, at this time. However, if grandmother was unconscious, it could not have been a great consolation to have seen her. Who conducted the funeral services?—that is, what clergyman? And the friends—were there many present? I presume you are tired enough. I hope you will not get sick. St. A—sends her love, and condole with you in your affliction. Let me hear soon again."

Diary: "*April 30th.*—This morning we had Mass, and all received Holy Communion. A happy day again. Yes! a thrice happy day! It seems as if the hour spent this morning was *so* short—passed so quickly! Oh, my God! and hast Thou been here in my heart once more! Yes! there is no room for doubt! Faith, *blessed* faith, teaches us this: that He, our Creator, disdains not to come and feed our souls with that Heavenly bread! Yes, He comes!—were I not assured by the very words of His mouth, I should be tempted to think He could not have loved us so!

But why speak? *He comes!* Oh my soul! in such a moment as this what canst thou say? Canst thou know that it is thy *Jesus*, and live? Canst thou feel that He is so near, opening His treasures, purifying thee from the stains of sin, pouring His graces upon thee, and remain indifferent? Canst thou know that He who came from heaven, has been made man, has suffered and died upon the Cross for love of thee, and now crowns all by coming to take up His abode with thee?—canst thou know all this, and not feel that there is no pleasure in the world but that which is found in His service? Can my heart be cold when I have Him who is all love for me as its guest? Ah! it is too often so! Yes! my God, how often do I approach to receive Thee with little love, with perhaps a very faint desire of possessing Thee. But to-day is passed. I have had the happiness of receiving another visit from my Redeemer this morning; Oh, would that I might keep His graces, that I might live *one day* without willingly offending Him. Alas! while I live, I am always in danger of being ungrateful towards my God."

"*May 1st.*—The anniversary of Helen's baptism. One year ago I stood beside her at the Altar, and saw the regenerating waters descend upon her. Oh! what a joyous day—but all joy is mingled with sorrow! A year has passed, and to-day I am far separated from that dear sister, but in spirit I have been with her. I offered my Communion yesterday for her, and she has often been with me in my actions since. I am *sure* she is not sad to-day, even though the sacrifice has been great which has been required from her; still the *recompense* will be much greater."

About this time a rumor began to circulate in Vermont, that Debbie was intending to become a nun, and had even taken some preliminary vow in that direction. Her parents were greatly distressed upon hearing this report, and caused Helen to write immediately, inquiring of her as to its truth. In reply to that letter, she says:

"St EUSTACHE, MAY 16TH, '57—My dear Parents,

I have just received Helen's letter, dated the 12th, and am somewhat surprised to hear that you are all in so much anxiety about my becoming a nun ! When I left home, I gave my word that I would return ; my intention is not otherwise at present. I have made that promise ; it will be fulfilled perfectly. I shall be at home. at the farthest. the last week in July ; I gave my word for it, and you may expect me if I am living, and when there shall probably remain as long you will want me. Every one seems to imagine that I am in great haste. I wish to assure you that Mr.—, of whom you speak,(or rather Helen does in her letter,) expects nothing else than that I should return to Vermont, and desires nothing else ; therefore, I imagine he has been far from spreading any such reports as you have heard. I am very well and very contented, as usual. I hope you are all in good health at home. I received the money father sent, and thank him very much for it. I shall probably go to Montreal the last week of this month. I receive the St Albans *Messenger* regularly. It has just come with Helen's letter. I perceive she is much engaged in her school. Do not let her get sick, for when I go home, I shall want all in good trim. As I suppose, after a year's absence, the news will be plenty ; I shall wish to hear all, and it requires some one who talks about as fast as Helen does, to tell them. My love to all. I hope to hear soon and often. Your affectionate child,

“DEBBIE BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie.*”

Diary : “MAY 17TH. I am very anxious to hear again from home, for I am in constant dread that they may come for me. I begin to feel sad to think vacations are near, and I must again leave the Convent of the Congregation. I shall soon wish to be back, after my return home, and I imagine the long hours when I shall sigh for the happiness of convent life, the quiet of St. Eustache, and, more than all, the frequent visits to Montreal. It is said that ‘home is where the heart is.’ I know well, then, where mine is ; and when I shall be far away, my thoughts will often wander

back to the Congregation of Notre Dame, and there find their resting-place. Splendor speaks in vain to an exile; and pleasure, short-lived, deceitful pleasure, relieves but for an instant the pain of banishment. Amidst the noise and bustle of a busy world, surrounded by vanity and fading joys, his heart turns from this strange land, and finds its happiness but in thoughts of *home*! And thus shall I feel when once more I leave *my* convent home. I have already experienced the pain of absence from that loved spot, and the second time will be worse than the first. But hope on, hope ever; there may be an end of it before very long! God's will, not mine, be done. I leave *all* things in His hands and with the Blessed Virgin to assist me, all must be right."

It may be proper to notice here, a feature, not the least singular among those which characterized her remarkable religious life that with all her yearning fondness and devoted attachment to her dear "convent home" and its holy inmates, she never felt that she was destined to be a member of that favored community. I was indeed very much surprised in the course of the first conversation I had with her, (some months after the death of her sister Helen,) upon a subject so sacred, that it should be approached by those in secular life with the greatest reverence, to find that while she felt assured of her vocation to consecrate her life at some future period to God, it was also clearly indicated to her as His will that, (whatever sacrifice it might cost her,) the oblation should be laid upon the altar of the corporal works of mercy, in her own country, and among her own people. Knowing nothing whatever of the Sisters of Mercy, their rule or the conditions of entrance into the Order, she still felt herself drawn to that Institute, and desired to partake with them in those labors which should entitle her to claim a share also in that gracious invitation of Him, whom alone she desired to serve in His poor,—“come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me meat; I was thirsty and

you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came unto me." Although He did not permit her to realize her ardent desire in this world, we cannot doubt that He will bestow the same reward upon her in another for her pious and sincere intentions, as if she had lived to fulfill them.

The letter last presented to the reader did not prove at all satisfactory to her father, who still feared she entertained intentions which were far from her thoughts at that time. He, therefore, wrote to her himself, requesting an explicit and decided answer to his questions. She replied :

" CONGREGATION OF NOTRE DAME, }
ST. EUSTACHE, MAY 29, 1857. }

" My dear Parents: I have just received the answer to my letter, and am somewhat surprised that my reply to Helen's last was not a sufficient assurance against the reports that are circulating in Vermont. I thought I was *plain enough*, but as it seems to be necessary, I will write again. I cannot see why you should put so much dependence upon what you hear. I have never taken any *vows*, and, more than that, never *said* I would, to any living being. I have no *other* intention, at present, than that which I expressed in my last letter. As for what future years may bring forth, I cannot say, nor any one else; for the present, you may content yourselves, for I have come to no such decision as you have heard. But now, since you have so poor an opinion of my truth, and you seem to think that this defect has arisen in my character since I have embraced the Catholic faith, I wish to say a few words. I am very sorry that my good Father has this opinion of me, but I would much prefer him to cast the slur upon me than upon the Holy religion I profess; but that he shall not have cause to complain of me on this subject, I will repeat what I have often said at home; that is, that no one need ever expect me to form any engagement, or dream that I will *ever* enter the married life! This is a thing

long ago *settled*,—a *fixed* determination, which is just as strong now as ever. My resolution you have often heard. I suppose there is no need of further explanations. I have given you what I think to be a frank answer to your questions, and regard for your feelings has been my principle. Yes, it has always been; and what *pains* me the most of anything in this world is, that my father has such an opinion of me as to think I would afflict him willingly. If he could know how I felt, when reading his letter—how many tears of sorrow I have shed over the thought that *he* believes me heartless, he would not repeat the assertion! I think I have given him sufficient proofs that I respect his commands, that I love to do all that he can desire, when it does not go contrary to my first duty, which is to my God! And he should know that on this earth, my affections are for my parents. I have none, I shall never have any one before them. I need not repeat these words—they are only too familiar to you now. I hope you will cease to be uneasy, and believe me to be happy and contented. Your affectionate child,

“M. D. BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie.*”

“CONGREGATION DE NOTRE DAME, }
ST. EUSTACHE, JUNE 2, 1857. } ”

“My Dear L—e: Since I wrote you last I have been in Montreal. I must tell you about my visit. It was last week. I received a letter from Maria Villa, the boarding-school of the sisters of the Congregation, to be there the 26th of May, for the coronation of their May Queen. The one who had been elected was the sister of my friend St. A—e. She is a lovely girl about seventeen years old: her place of residence is Quebec. Maria Villa is a magnificent place on the mountain of Mount Royal. The boarding-school is one of the best in Canada. The young ladies number generally about one hundred. Every year they elect one for their Queen, and she is crowned with great ceremony. I will give you a brief description of that day. I arrived the evening pre-

vious, and the next day was of course a grand holiday. About one o'clock I went to assist the Queen elect to dress, and about two o'clock the ceremonies commenced. The hall opened for the occasion is said to be one of the finest on this continent. In one end large evergreen trees were raised, and a statue of the ever Blessed Virgin mounted on a very high pedestal in the centre. The throne was then raised about five steps from the floor, and vases of flowers and ornaments of different kinds were placed beside the Queen's chair and those of her two first maids of honor. The people having arrived, the Bishop was announced by a grand trio upon the piano. It was the Bishop of Oregon who crowned her. After the music, a kind of Drama was enacted, which I am sure you would have thought beautiful. It seemed to be company of young girls who were lamenting the loss of their sovereign, and were consulting upon the choice of another, who should be one noted for her virtues, and beloved by all. In the midst of their conversation, two angels appeared to them, clothed in white, with their long hair loose down their backs, and wreaths of flowers on their heads. They came as Messengers from Heaven, to tell them who had been chosen by the celestial courts as their Queen. They spoke of her humility, her mildness, her piety, and of all her virtues, and the young maidens at length besought the two angels to bring her to them, that they might see and acknowledge her as their sovereign. They disappeared, and soon returned, leading her, and followed by ten maids of honor. She looked lovely, dressed in white muslin, trimmed with satin ribbon and white French roses, a beautiful veil which reached to the floor—white slippers and gloves: and beside her angel conductors were two little children about seven years old, bearing upon a large silver plate her crown. The maids of honor were in blue, with white veils. After being presented to her subjects, she was led forward and knelt to receive the crown; after which she ascended the throne, attended by her maids, while the grand

Coronation March, as a trio, was played. Then followed "An Address to our Queen," by one of her first maids, and the address of the Queen spoken by her first maid of honor. Singing, and a few words by the Bishop, and the procession left the hall for the chapel, where we had Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; and, after the clergy had left the Sanctuary, Miss B—s, the Queen, entered, and taking her crown from her head, placed it upon the Altar.

"I have given you this description, for I found the ceremony so beautiful, I thought you would be interested to hear of it. Miss B— is a lovely person. She expects to go to Europe with her father very soon."

"CONGREGATION OF NOTRE DAME, }
ST. EUSTACHE, JUNE 7, 1857. }

"My Dear Mother: Yours was received yesterday morning. It gave me much pleasure to hear that you were all well. I hope Helen will not get sick with her cold. I imagine the weather in Vermont has been something like ours here. In fact we have had but one or two warm days, and at present it is quite cold. If warm weather does not come faster than this, I shall not feel it much. . . . I suppose you have plenty to do, as usual. I imagine I see you sometimes in the garden. St. A— has a fondness for flowers equal to yours, and her pupils have been bringing any quantities to her all the Spring. When she has a moment's time she is sure to be weeding, or attending to her plants in some way. You have not sent me any word about your garden. I am not able to tell you yet exactly what time I shall be home, for the day of our examination is not yet fixed. I do not think the warm weather will affect me much—I am so well now, and there are only about six weeks before the close of school. At present we are preparing for our examinations, and of course all in a hurry. The young ladies here are preparing two Dramas to be acted, one in English and the other in French. The former I have the care of exercising, of course. It is not very long, and they learn it pret-

ty well for children who are only studying English. The French piece is very beautiful. When the programme is made out I will send you one. That will be before long. We have about forty children now—that is, ma Tante St. A—'s class—and Sister L— has about the same number. The Congregation has two hundred and four professed nuns, and they have so much to do that it is impossible to have three on this mission. The novices number over twenty, and not one-third of them are at the community—all on missions : and those who are making their first year's noviciate, numbering over thirty, are most of them in the suburbs of Montreal teaching the poor. Sister L— scolds a good deal to think she cannot get another to assist her ; but she does not effect much by it. I have no more time to write. Give my love to father and the children. Your true

DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*"

"CONGREGATION DE NOTRE DAME, }
ST. EUSTACHE, JUNE 21ST, 1857. }

"My Dear Carrie : I cannot give you a very good reason for remaining so long without answering your last letter ; one thing after another seemed to come in the way. I have passed a few days in Montreal, and we are preparing for examination, which of course takes up the time and attention of the teachers. I know you will excuse me this time as I am not subject to the fault in question.

"I went to Montreal to be present at the coronation of the May Queen at Maria Villa."

"I leave Canada once more next month. Would that the day would never come, but hope cheers me on. I go with a sad heart, but I trust all will yet be as I desire.

"Helen writes often. She is not very well, but very happy. I do not think either of us will leave home next year. I find pleasure in the thought that she will be with me yet awhile. For when once separated, perhaps it will be our final parting here.

"As for myself, I had rather say nothing at pres-

ent. Not that I am afraid to confide in you, but I do not know clearly what to say. I have had trouble enough lately getting my parents and friends quiet on the subject. They had come to the conclusion that my intention was to become a religious, and of course considered it their duty to prevent me if possible. I have given them a little ease, but I fear not much.

"But, my dear Carrie, why try to lighten the cross which our Divine Master has given us? Has He not — the Innocent One! — borne it before us? When I embraced the Catholic Faith I looked for trials and I have had but very few. Could I ask them to be less? Can I, who have received from God so many gifts, and above all that of Faith, deem these things hard? Oh my friend! could I who profess to be one of His followers, one of those who love Him, see that Divine Saviour drink His bitter chalice alone? Oh no, my Jesus! if Thou thinkest me worthy to suffer something for Thy Name's sake, I am satisfied. Only give me strength to suffer all with patience and joy. Oh my Carrie! what a religion we have! what a holy consoling thought that we are not separated from the Catholic Church. This is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Do not forget me. Make some acts of Reparation for your poor Debbie, who has so much need of them, and I will not forget you either. The Month of Mary passed with all its lovely services, and I trust blessings have been laid up in Heaven for us. This life is very short, and what matters it if Eternity only be gained. I must close my letter here, for I have much to do. If you write before the 16th of next month direct to St. Eustache, otherwise to Fairfield. St. A—e sends love and would write if she had time. Write soon and pray for your devoted friend

"DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*"

CHAPTER VII.

At the close of the examinations at St. Eustache, in the latter part of July, 1857, Debbie went with her beloved "Tante" to Montreal, where they met the father of that lady, who had come to take the young sister (mentioned by Debbie in her letters, as a pupil of the institution, and who has since become a member of that holy Order,) home for the vacation. He urged Debbie with such cordial politeness to accompany his daughter and himself to Quebec for a visit, that he succeeded in overruling the hesitation she felt at first, lest her parents might be unpleasantly disappointed by this further delay of her return home. She therefore wrote to them explaining the cause of that delay, and accepted the invitation. She felt herself bound to the kindred of one to whom she owed so much as a Catholic, by far stronger ties than those of ordinary friendship. Two weeks were passed most agreeably in the pleasant family of that friend, during which she received every attention from its whole circle that affection and admiration could prompt. She always recurred with grateful pleasure to the recollections connected with that visit, and the consideration and regard with which she was treated by all. They, on their part, were charmed with their lovely guest, and have ever remembered her with sentiments of affectionate esteem, bordering upon veneration, for the surpassing loveliness of character, person and manners. She was also very much admired in Quebec beyond that family circle, as well as in other parts of Canada where she was seen, and had not her

irrevocable choice as to her future state of life been made known, she would not have lacked numerous opportunities for establishing herself, (in a worldly point of view,) in the most desirable position.

About a month after her return from St. Eustache we received another visit from her and her sister Helen, whose health was beginning to exhibit symptoms that awakened the most lively apprehensions in our hearts, as well as in that of her sister, on her account. Indeed, among the most touching of our cherished memories of the sisters, are those of the solicitude, (more maternal than sisterly,) which Debbie constantly manifested for her precious Helen, and the loving appreciation with which it was received, while the acceptance of it was always marked by some mischievous drollery or merry conceit on the part of the recipient that was all her own. Their natures, distinctly marked by opposite attributes and wide diversities of temperament, seemed to be drawn into still closer union by those very contrasts. The isolated position in which they stood, bound so lovingly together by the golden links of the Catholic faith, made the thought of their possible separation by death even more painful to their Catholic friends, to whom they were inexpressibly dear, than to themselves—so well had they learned at that early period of life, by the aid of peculiar trials, the difficult lesson of perfect conformity to the will of God, which is rarely acquired during the varied experiences of a long life.

We had but just entered upon the enjoyment of their visit, when a distressing accident, which befell a member of our family interrupted the pleasure, and was the means of hastening their departure. They left us, however, with the promise of an early return to finish the visit. It would have been a sorrowful parting indeed for us, if we had known that the promise was destined never to be fulfilled, and their presence together, (in consequence of changes in our domestic arrangements, which brought a large accession to the numbers of our household, for that year,) was never again to enliven our solitudes.

The following letter was written from our place during that visit and addressed to her friend L—, who had come from Chicago to pass a few weeks in Vermont.

“SWANTON, SEPT. 29TH, 1857.

“My own dear L—e: I was much disappointed at not seeing you before I left Burlington, but was obliged to say to myself, ‘I shall see her soon,’ and come away with no greater consolation. We came directly to Mr. S—’s of Swanton, where I am enjoying myself finely. I often think, however, of you, and feel as though I must see you soon. I am too much interested in the welfare of my early friend to forget each day to offer a fervent prayer to Heaven that she may be shielded from all the evils of this weary world. My thoughts often revert to our conversation the night I passed with you, and I am so fearful that your heart will grow cold and indifferent to every joy since some have proved so fleeting. May I speak just as I wish to? I know you will not feel angry. Let me tell my L— that she will find nothing in this world’s joys to fill the heart. I know too well how short-lived are those things. I have known by experience. And I feel for you so much, my darling friend, that I can but speak. Perhaps you will think me foolish, but if you knew for one hour the happiness which one feels who trusts in God alone, you would see Debbie in a different light. I long so often to clasp you to my heart and make you partake of my heart’s feelings.

“The trials which are sent us here are for our sanctification. We can improve them so well also. What a blessing they have been to me no one knows, and you can make them so to yourself. I am looking for your visit to Fairfield with the brightest expectations. You must come, will you not? And then how long will we speak of days gone by, of the present, and even of the future. It must not seem like a blank to you or me. We have our missions to perform. Our paths *differ* as yet, would to God they might one day be alike.

"FAIRFIELD WEDNESDAY. I have just arrived home and your letter just received. I knew you had good reasons for not coming and I did not feel hurt, but I longed for your face once more. I am hoping, however, that you will visit me soon. Though I can not expect you immediately, I may before your return to Chicago. I intended to have my likeness taken for you before I left Burlington but had not the time. The next time I am in St. Albans I will do so, and you must send me yours very soon.

"I will pray for you often, and I know some requests must be granted. And now L— dear, good night! Pleasant dreams and a light heart to thee, and believe me thy most devoted friend,

"DEBBIE, *Child of Mary.*"

The following extract from a letter, written by Debbie, to a young friend from the southern part of the State (then attending school in Burlington), whose recent conversion had filled the hearts of Catholics with joy, will, I am sure, be interesting to our readers:

"FAIRFIELD, OCT. 17, 1857—*Sunday Evening.*

"My Dear Miss—My Sister Helen has teased me to-night until I have promised to write to you before I go to sleep. I had intended to do so myself, but not being very well had given it up. Although our acquaintance has been so very short, still the interest is as great, which we feel for you and your sister, as though we had been friends for years. And why should it not be so? Called as we have been, so similarly to the Catholic faith, alone as we are, the oldest of our families—we can not but feel drawn to sympathize with one another. I have long desired to meet and know both yourself and your estimable sister whom I have heard spoken of so frequently. I have learned to look to my Catholic friends for pleasure, and may I not number you among them? The heart yearns oftentimes for some one with whom something else can be spoken of beside the vanities of this world. To-day I heard a sermon which made me think of *you* as well as myself. It was on

'Thanksgiving for the Gift of *Faith*.' Truly we are among the number who have reason to be thankful to Almighty God! We can not speak half we feel! Of our heart's sentiments we have to keep the greater share to ourselves; for *can* we speak when the soul is *most* absorbed in the one great theme—*Jesus our Beloved*? Still we can help each other in our bearing of His Cross, and the encouraging word of a friend in the trials of this life are like balm upon the wounded spirit. The hand of Charity, given to assist us in our journey through this vale of tears, is ever welcome. Then we will be friends—will we not? Let our prayers be united for the conversion of those near and dear to us, and for our *perseverance*. Give my love to your sister; send my letter to her if you choose. I should be most happy to hear from her if she will favor me so much. Helen sends love. . . . She will write when she is able. Let us hear from you very soon. We should be so delighted! Remember us in your fervent prayers. . . .

"FAIRFIELD, OCT, 25TH, 1857.

"My Dear Carrie: Your letter was received some days since; I must say I had given up all hopes of hearing from you again, and I think now I must thank our friend C—s for the favor. I am very much obliged at any rate, and of course ready to reply, for should 'Auld Lang Syne' be forgotten? No, all must live in the memory though time and distance may separate forever those who have been true friends. How short was our acquaintance! and yet how strong and lasting the tie which binds us. . . . Oh Carrie dear! you would find that four years have wrought a great change upon Debbie. I am sure you would find me much the same in regard to some things, but how different in others. I would fain tell you all, that you might know what I have experienced, but why trouble another with those things? I am as happy now as I can be, until some future day when all shall be given to God which this heart can give. I have, since I saw you Carrie, seen changes enough to make me look somewhere besides this world for

consolation, and have found it. . . . Time passed and I had renounced the friendship of the world, abjured Protestantism, and entered the bosom of the Catholic Church. From that moment to know God's will with regard to my vocation became the subject of prayer with me. I waited patiently. Need I tell you, Carrie that my decision is fixed for the *religious life*. Yes! it is so, and this has not been done in haste. I know well now where our Divine Master calls me, and rejoicing to suffer yet more for His sake, I am submissive to His will. . . .

"And now Carrie, let me speak of those who were near and dear to me. Many have left me, for the change in my religious principles has estranged them. *Some* have learned to *forget*. . . . Of this I am glad to know, for I now see the Hand of Providence in *all*, and would not for worlds have it otherwise. Since my profession of our holy religion I have found my happiness consisted not in the possession of any one's affections, and now I see that Jesus alone can satisfy my soul. If you knew how I long to fly from this world's pleasures and consecrate myself to the service of God! But I must wait. Two years, at least, I am still to be here. . . . My sisters desire to become Catholics and I must wait awhile to see them settled. Anna is sixteen and when she is a little older will take the all-important step. . . .

"I heard with joy of your intention to visit Keeseville this winter, and you must come and see me. . .

"I hear from St. A— quite frequently. I enjoyed myself so much with her last year, and most probably it is the last I shall ever spend with her." . . .

"FAIRFIELD, NOV. 10TH 1857.

"My own dear L—e: I had waited long for a word from you when your welcome letter arrived. I am sorry you have been attacked with such a cold. We all know how to sympathize with you for every one of us have had a siege, but are all doing well now, except Helen, who does not seem to improve any, and as far as I can judge is failing. Her cough seems worse and her stomach is no better, which is

unfavorable. However her spirits are always good, and I think she looks upon her situation as a dangerous one, still is always gay. I am more troubled I fear than she is, and this shows my attachment to earth. I am too fond of it yet though it has lost many of its charms for me.

"Helen is the light of my life now, I do not know how I could remain here without her. She is cheerfulness itself and says to me sometimes, 'Debbie I shall reach *home* first, dont you see I am *betrothed to Death*?' and she seems joyous at the thought. Oh what a sacrifice it is to me to see her sinking and think there is no help for her. But why speak of this long? I must be cheerful or I shall make others sad, and this should not be. In fact I do not think I am sad, for I have too many things to be thankful for; I need not enumerate them here. Would to God I might see the mercy of His Hand in sending me these gifts, and then I should see as I ought, how kind He is to send afflictions also. Heaven can not be gained by a life of ease here below. Our Divine Lord leads His children by a different path, even the one He tried Himself, and truly it was one of suffering. He has made the cross light, humiliations joyous, contempt an honor, and finally He has made all trials so sweet when united with His sufferings that sometimes I think I would not for world's exchange them for ease and comfort. There is a sacredness in sorrow, there is a deliciousness in tears, oh! who shall rob us of them when they gain for us, (through the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus,) bright gems for a heavenly crown?

"I am sure you think me very grave to-night, but what my heart feels I must write. I know you will not imagine I mean to intrude, but if you only knew L—, the consolations of Faith you would not be surprised. I do not say too much of our Holy Religion. I *cannot*. Too much can never be said. Saints have made it their theme for ages, and yet all has not been said. But search for the *Truth*, and you will find it."

She writes again to her young friend in Burlington:

“FAIREFIELD, Nov. 13, 1857.

“My very dear Friend: I need not assure you that your reply to my letter received a most *hearty* welcome, from both my sister and myself; firstly, from the fact of our regard for the writer; and secondly, the very pleasing news which the letter contained—that of your sister’s baptism. Yes! I *can* rejoice with you over the entrance of a soul so dear to you into the fold of Jesus Christ. I have joined with you all in thanksgiving for the gift of Faith, which has been bestowed upon her while yet so young. You may well say, it would be a happy thing could she die before *sin* had sullied her baptismal robe! And yet, if so it could be, no occasion would she have had to prove her love for our dearest Lord. Life is not so dark as we often feel it is, if we only spent it in working for Him who has done so much for us! True there is always *sin* in this poor world, and this almost tempts me to wish I had died in some happy hour when my soul was in a state of grace; but then the thought comes to me, I must not be lazy. Jesus desires us to work a while here, and, though poor laborers, we surely can not refuse the little we can do. However I think He favors those whom He calls to an early home. They seem to be pure souls, whom He can not bear to see remaining here to suffer. But to return to your sister J.; give my love to her, and tell her that I shall expect a share in her prayers. I, too, my dear friend, have seen a beloved sister received into our Holy Church. It was one of the happiest days of my life, and the hour when I saw *her* renounce the world and its vain joys, I could not but recall the same time in my own life, and live it over again. Time passes away and I am little aware that nearly two years have elapsed since I made my profession of the Catholic Faith! I am still finding new beauties, and so I suppose we always shall. In thanksgiving for the great blessings we have received, what could we do

too much? I am writing while Helen sleeps. She has not been as well for the past few weeks. I am somewhat discouraged about her. Her cough is very troublesome, and many of her symptoms are worse. Her spirits are always gay. She sends love to you and your sister also."

"FAIRFIELD, DEC. 6TH, 1857.

"My own dear Carrie: A few lines to you to-day in reply to your kind letter which gave me so much pleasure. I have attended Mass and have just returned. I suppose you have also been present at the Adorable Sacrifice, and perhaps have received your Divine Lord this morning. I have not had that happiness myself, and I trust I have been remembered by some one who has been so closely united to our sweet Saviour on this day. Last Monday was the anniversary of my baptism, and I had prepared, or tried to prepare my soul to celebrate that joyous feast. How swiftly two years have passed away! I can scarcely realize it. Time does his work so quickly. I need not say that my happiness seems complete; when I think of the long time I waited ere I was admitted into the Fold of Jesus Christ, and realize the delights which are experienced in frequent recourse to the holy Sacraments, I look back upon my past life as almost a blank. It is truly a consolation to look at the state from which God in His infinite mercy has called me, and meditating upon His love, try to return Him thanks for His manifold benefits.

"And now Carrie, how are you going to pass Christmas? Have you made any arrangement for the holidays? We do not in Fairfield, (any one but Helen and I,) think much of this great Festival, and we have to make our own plans for celebrating this, and other festivals, without reference to others. Alas! for the days of last year!

"You had heard of the death of dear Kate Thom-
isson. So unexpected! She was one of my warmest friends, and I regret much that death has robbed us so soon. Have you seen a notice of her death in any

of the papers? There was an obituary in the Tablet, and in the St. Louis Leader. I have not seen the Pilot, so do not know whether there was one in that or not. She will be remembered by many. Do you ever see any of our convent friends? They are scattered far and wide!

"HOME—FRIDAY EVENING.

"My own dear L—e: I could not retire to-night without writing you a few lines in reply to your kind letter. I am happy to hear you intend to visit Fairfield soon, and I will most assuredly meet you in St. Albans, if it is in my power, if not I will send for you. I think of spending Christmas in St. Albans and I wish you could come the next day which will be the 26th of this month. I am delighted to think you are coming and then L—, I trust I shall have it in my power to convince you that I feel a deeper interest in you than ever, and that my love is as sincere, my friendship as truthful as before. You will find that 'Debbie' is still the same.

"I must say good night. To-morrow morning I must be up early to attend Church, and Sunday is my day for Holy Communion. I will not forget you, my own L—, when I kneel to receive that Heavenly Food, and my prayers shall arise to the Throne of the Most High for your welfare. Would you wish to be remembered there?"

(To the same.)

"MADRID, N. Y., FEBRUARY 11, 1858.

"My own dear L—e: I am not inclined to wait one day before answering your letter just received. I am at Madrid still, you perceive, and am enjoying myself better than could be expected. I find my friends very cordial and kind. Helen is much the same. My uncle and his partner have examined her lungs, and say there is but very little, if any hope of her ever being any better. She will probably linger until another fall; but it is beyond all reason to suppose she can recover. I never saw a person more resigned to death. If God so wills, she is

happier to die than live. If it was His will she should recover, it is her's also.

"I do not know how long we may stay. It is uncertain. I am going with my uncle to-night to a wedding. You will think I am getting gay again: but not too much so. I am more and more fatigued with the pleasures of this world. They gratify me not for one hour. Such conversation—so frivolous, so vain! so little of true worth can be derived from it. I am tired, heartily so, of parties, visits, calls, formalities, &c. To absent myself from such, and find true happiness in working for a nobler end than I have heretofore, is my highest ambition. I find more contentment in the quiet of my own room, away from the distractions of the world, than amid its gayest scenes. One hour alone, in meditation upon the vanity of all things temporal, and the reality of those which are eternal, is worth more to my soul—adds more to my enjoyment, than a thousand spent in seeking the false pleasures of this life.

"Let us consider these things, my friend; let us remember that our souls are *immortal*; we have but one life to live, and then comes *eternity*. We know not the hour when it shall burst upon us in its awful reality. Then let us take *active steps* to prepare for that time. We cannot count upon to-morrow as ours. If we were dying now, what would we wish to have done during life? Let us do *now* what we shall wish we had done, when we come to leave this earth to appear before God.

"We are thinking of going to St. Albans in the Spring. I may have told you this before."

Helen's health continued to decline during the winter, though so gradually as hardly to be perceptible from week to week. In the early part of that winter, their friends had decided upon their accompanying some acquaintances who were expecting to pass that season in Florida, and every preparation and arrangement was made for their departure. Subsequent and unforeseen occurrences compelled those acquaintances to relinquish the plan, and they also gave it up, much

to Helen's relief, for she had regarded it with reluctance from the first. She seemed to feel quite sure that the disease which was upon her had already advanced too far to be arrested by any change of climate, and that she should be subjected to much fatigue and many discomforts, without realizing any permanent benefit, which was, perhaps, a just view of the matter. Our poor Debbie felt keenly the pangs of their approaching separation. She wrote but little during the winter—an occasional short note to her friend at St. Eustache, or to some other friend, informing them of Helen's condition, from time to time.—In March, 1858, she writes to the former from Fairfield :

“ My heart would soon fly away from here, and be with those who see me, as it were kindred spirits. I am ill at ease with those who understand me not. But, hush ! I must not complain. I should not raise this voice against what seems to be the will of my Divine Saviour ! and I did not intend to—Heaven forbid ! I only speak from the fullness of my heart, knowing to whom I am addressing myself. You know, ‘ Out of the abundance of the *heart* the mouth speaketh ;’ and so I write to ma Tante S——. You compliment me in your last letter ; shall I tell you how ? You say you ‘ feel certain that God loves me ;’ so do I ! My crosses, though small, are sufficient to prove to me that my Heavenly Father remembers me. The ‘ back is fitted for its burthen,’ you know and I am certain I shall have none too much. Since I have chosen *Jesus* for my guide, my love and my model, I cannot shrink from the cross which He presents—from the path He has trod Himself ; besides, is there so consoling a thought as that God “ loveth whom He chasteneth ?” This is my consolation and it is sufficient. I have been to St Albans and seen our good Bishop — had a pleasant conversation with him which cheered me very much. His cheerfulness, his smile of approbation, and his blessings, are enough to encourage any one. Saw Sister C —, also, while at St. Albans—felt like a child. The past came up, and in one moment I lived it

all over again ! I saw at a glance the enjoyments of the few months I had spent at the convent ; I felt that I would give worlds to lose sight forever of the weary scenes of life, and, leaving all, be consecrated to the only Object worthy of love ! These thoughts filling my mind, and the warm welcome—the words of sympathy—which she gave me, were too much ! I went from the house, and entering the church, wept until my heart was relieved in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament ! It was Thursday evening, and some preparations were making for Benediction. The “ *Tantum Ergo*,” came over me with its usual calm influence, and soon my soul was soothed to peacefulness ! I no more looked upon the darkness and affliction of my present hours ; but, forgetting all I could look to Heaven and return thanks for the blessings received—the great gift of Faith ! for which we can never be thankful enough. As the “ *Compar sit Laudatio*” died away, and the silence rendered the scene more impressive still, I felt the load removed, and after the Benediction was given, all was over ! The tears fell fast, but they were tears of joy rather than sorrow. Was it not enough to make me feel submission to the Divine will ! to make me come and accept cheerfully the crosses and trials of this life ? Ah, yes ! *one hour* in the presence of Him we love—one Benediction, is sufficient to pay us for all our sufferings ! Oh ! ma Tante, I could speak of these things forever—could you not ? The love of *Jesus* for man !—Is it not a tale often told, but never tiresome ! always new, and each time more beautiful !

(To the same :) “ FAIRFIELD, APRIL, 1858. Passed Holy Week with Helen, at St. Albans, at Mr. Hoyt’s : enjoyed it very much, though Helen was able to go out but very little. She went to Mass on Holy Thursday, but not until after the *Credo* was sung, when Mr. Hoyt went and brought her over to the church. She received Holy Communion on Easter Sunday. I went with her about half-past 7 o’clock in the morning ; in fact she was hardly able, but would go, and said, in so doing : “ It is my last Easter

Communion, and prehaps, Debbie, the *last time we shall go together !*" Dear sister is fast going *home*, and she is so lovely !—every one speaks of it. She is the very same Helen as far as gayety is concerned, and so happy, so peaceful, so perfectly resigned to the will of God ! It has always been her favorite virtue, resignation ; she says, whatever she may have done, she has always endeavored to say under all circumstances, ' God's will be done ! ' and truly she is not less ready now than ever to repeat it. She is fading gradually away, like some beautiful flower. From day to day I watch the change, and think ' truly she *is* too good for earth.' She suffers more than many in consumption, but is always patient." I will now give extracts from some letters to her young friend at Burlington, who has been introduced in the preceding pages.

" FAIRFIELD, APRIL 11, '58. My dear friend —: .. was very thankful for your kindness in writing ; and hope to hear from you still oftener. Your letter brought welcome news. I want to know how you manage to gain your father's good will as you do. It seems so singular that he should allow your sisters to be baptized. I do not understand it. But our Divine Lord sees fit so to have it ; and I cannot complain if He deals another way with us. I congratulate you, and your good sisters, and begin to think your prayers are more fervent than mine, and that I shall enjoy some of those blessed privileges when I am better myself. Our dear Helen is failing. Truly she will gain in leaving this poor world ! I can hardly imagine she is to go so soon, but I must give her up. She has been my companion in joy and in sorrow. She has stood by me through the varied scenes of the past few years, and it is hard to think I must be separated from her, but God's will be done. He knows what is best and I cannot murmur. It will be but a few short days, and I trust we shall be united where partings are never known ! My heart was sad this morning. I went to receive the Bread of Life, and *she* was not with me. Last Sunday we both went, and she remarked, ' this

is probably the last time we shall go together." She said, she felt sensible that she was failing. She is happy, and I trust we shall be resigned. I will remember you in my prayers, and the church in O—, and in return you must pray for us here."

"FAIRFIELD, APRIL 24, 1858.—My own dear L—e : Yours has been received, and I hasten to reply. How shall I begin, and what shall I say ? God knows my intention is good, and that I desire nothing but your welfare. Then I will begin, and if anything escapes my pen which should not, pardon and forget.

"I rejoice that you have concluded to live for Him who constitutes the true happiness of His creatures. I am rejoiced that you, too, my friend, have found that this world, its pleasures and allurements, can never satisfy our hearts. You too have concluded that God alone can render a soul truly happy. So it is. *God alone* should be our motto. And now that you have become convinced that religion is necessary for us here and hereafter, seek to know the will of Him Who has already given you some light—Who has already turned His face to look upon your soul. Pray for guidance into the true path, my dear friend, with the firm intention of following where Jesus shall lead, and you will not, I trust, go astray. Our Divine Saviour wishes us to appear before the world as His followers. I do not wish to say too much, but you know, L—, my interest in you, and I cannot help asking you to seek with *diligent prayer*, the way which Jesus Christ has ordained for His faithful children, and for all, if they would but see. I do not wish you to think I am going to sermonize ; but it would be wrong for me to be silent on such a topic.

"*Sunday afternoon.*—My dear L— : I have just returned from Church, where I have had the happiness of approaching the most holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood, soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ. Can a heart that has never approached this holy Table know what joy, what inward peace reigns in the soul, at this union with her Heavenly Spouse ?

Can I make you understand, my own dear friend, the delights of that Banquet at which the Angels are forbidden to feast? I can only assure you that earth has no happiness like it. All the moments of pleasure I have ever had—all the enjoyments of this world, have been nothing compared with the sweet peace, the hallowed joy, of once leaning upon the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and, after pouring out all the deep griefs and hidden sorrows of the soul, then to receive Him in Holy Communion. This is all I want to render life happy; and, believe me, L—, it is enough. I did not forget you this morning; I prayed long for you, and will continue to do so."

[*To her Friend in Burlington.*]

"FAIRFIELD, MAY 2, 1858—*Sunday Evening.*

"My kind and loved Friend: While I write, you undoubtedly are present at the Evening Office of the Church, and I trust your thoughts turn to me once in a while, and you breathe a silent prayer for my perseverance. While you, my dear friend, are thus engaged—while the sounds of earthly music are bringing to your soul sweet thoughts of the celestial choirs, I am joining you in spirit, though absent in the body. I have read my vespers, and am quietly seated in my room writing to you; and, as I proceed, the happy emotions of my heart seem to wish utterance. I am thinking of you and me—of the mysterious love of our God, in calling us to such an inheritance as He has. . . . I have been listening to some conversation with regard to the great excitement throughout our country, termed a '*religious awakening*;' and more than ever, it seems to me, I have returned thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of faith which He has bestowed upon me. These Protestant '*Revivals*' have brought very forcibly to my mind the unspeakable blessings we have received in being rescued from such delusions, and admitted into the Church of Jesus Christ. And why us more than others? This is a question I often ask. But we know not: we only know it was a grace given us of God's own free mer-

cy, and not from any merit of our own; for we hardly wished for the gift at first, but He drew us by His love, and gave it to us almost without our asking it. The Month of Mary is just commencing. I suppose there are services in the church in Burlington. I had the happiness of being in St. Albans to commence the month, and received Holy Communion there yesterday morning. As for myself, I must be content with reading my meditations, and saying my prayers for this month pretty much alone. I suppose your sister S— is much more lonely in O— than we are here, and when I am tempted to complain, she rises up to condemn me, and I am *silent*. Helen has been more comfortable for the past week. Perhaps it is nothing lasting—I dare not hope too much. I thank you for your words of consolation, and should know from your letter that you *truly* sympathize with us. Helen and Anna join in much love to you and your sisters.”

“FAIRFIELD, JUNE 20, 1858.

“My own dear L—e: I received to-day the intelligence of your grandfather’s death, and now know the reason of your long silence. How is your grandmother? I am sure she must be very much worn out—and your dear self—how are you? Do you still intend to remain in Burlington until autumn? I shall soon expect you at Fairfield, and you must remain a number of weeks when you do come. Helen wants to see you very much, and my mother also. Helen is failing, she has not left her bed for more than a fortnight, and for the past week has been a great sufferer.

“Oh how time changes! how friends change; and, in fact, how all things change but God! Death and trouble, sorrow and pain, are recorded upon every page of the passing year, and one can hardly recognize in the things of this year any likeness to those of the last. But there is One Who never alters—Who is ever the same—unchangeable. This is our consolation in this poor world, and what a precious one!

[*To the same.*]

"FAIRFIELD, JULY 18, 1858.

"My own dear L—e: Yours was received last evening, and was a glad surprise to me. I almost felt that you were never going to write again, so long was your silence, but I have been happily disappointed. I am so anxious for time to pass swiftly away until after Commencement, for I am sure you will come then. When I let you go again is another question. Since I wrote last, Helen has failed somewhat. Her appetite is very poor. I thank you for your kind letter. I can truly say, my own L—, if God did not sustain us under afflictions, we should often sink. I know it is the will of our Divine Lord, and my constant prayer has ever been, that my will might be conformed to His. The spirit of sacrifice is my aim, and whatever helps me to attain it I know comes from the Hand of Jesus. To be united with Him upon the Cross is my only ambition. Though I love Him in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, in His triumphant march into Jerusalem; though my admiration and love are awakened when meditating upon the miracles of His active life—and I love to linger as the Apostles did, to catch the Divine words that fell from His sacred lips—still, it is upon the heights of Calvary that I find Him the most beautiful—it is there I wish to stay the longest: and, my own L—, I must not profess this, and be unwilling to share with my Divine Master in the chalice of His Passion. "In the cross is the height of virtue; in the cross is the perfection of sanctity," and there we must seek it. But how often we shrink from it! The reproof of the beautiful writer, A-Kempis, seems often to be very applicable to me. "All recommend patience, but few desire to suffer. Jesus has many companions of His table, but few of His abstinence." I hope you will let me know when to expect you, for I want to go to St. Albans for you myself. Remember me to your grandmother, and believe me ever the same."

"DEBBIE, *Enfant de Marie.*"

A few days later she wrote to her friend at St. Eustache :

“FAIRFIELD, JULY 29, 1858.

.... “Since I wrote you last, Helen has failed considerably. She continues very cheerful all the time, and seems to have no fear of death. She receives the sacraments every week, now that she is confined to her bed. Her stomach and bowels being equally diseased with her lungs, she has to suffer a great deal. Her constant cheerfulness is a subject of surprise among our Protestant friends, and admiration to Catholics. In hours of severe pain she changes not her smile, and between moments of distress and anguish, she will converse and laugh with those around her. She receives visits from all who ever knew her : they often say to me on leaving, ‘How can Helen be so happy? she must have something to sustain her!’ If they only knew! *If they only knew!* To me it is a great consolation, you may be sure, this her peaceful frame of mind; for when I am looking forward to my own loneliness, after her departure, I feel less sad to think that I shall have the memory of her submission to the will of our Divine Lord. (I had better say *joy* in it.) The consciousness that I am doing the will of God is enough to make me content. I am sometimes lonely for St. Eustache, but I will not complain. I had a year there which I little deserved, and it will *never* be forgotten. The remembrance of the graces there received, and of the quiet happiness of my sojourn with you, will be among the bright thoughts of my future!”

“In a letter to the Compiler of these memoirs, written August 1st, 1858, Debbie says: “Helen is now very feeble—does not sit up at all. I can see that she fails from day to day. You probably hear from her other ways; therefore I will leave the rest until you see her, which we were so happy to hear we might hope would be very soon. Helen and myself have looked for you and Mary to visit us, and longed to see you both; but we know also how little time you have to leave home, since your family is so

large, and of course have made all *allowances*. I heard from father R— of Bishop Young's visit to the family of our *faithful* Libbie in Ohio. I should not be surprised if her friends should yet be united with her in the precious bonds of the Catholic faith. What a joy it would be for her, for us, for *every* Catholic heart the world over—another glorious conquest of *Faith!* Be sure, I have not forgotten to pray for them; and for her, that she may be allowed to go to the Ursuline Convent in Cleveland, as she desires. It would be such a happiness for the dear child! I must not write more to-night, for I have not the time. Poor Helen says, 'I shall probably never visit my friends again they must come and see me.' You little know how feeble she is, and how much attention she requires. She joins me in warmest love to you and Aunt L—, who is, I hope, improving in health. I have heard several times she was not well. Present our kindest regards to your good husband S—, Mary, and all your family. I remain, yours very affectionately, DEBBIE BARLOW, *Enfant de Marie.*"

In fulfilment of the expectation mentioned in this letter, we went, (Mary and I,) soon after its receipt, to pass a long summer-day with them in Fairfield, starting very early in the morning. A short passage connected Helen's room with the parlor into which we were conducted upon our entrance. Debbie met us with great joy. We stopped to make some inquiries about Helen before going to her, when to our surprise the door into that passage opened suddenly, and Helen was before us! I shall never forget how like an angel she looked as she stood in that door-way; her face all radiant with joy, and the folds of her long white muslin robe floating about her! She had recognized our voices and could not wait for us to ask questions, but must see us at once. It was so like our own Helen! Neither can I ever forget the emotions that swelled my heart almost to bursting, as I folded her in a long embrace, and then with loving chidings, half playful, half assumed to hide the grief which

must be suppressed, led her back to her bed. It was one of the few occasions upon which Debbie had known her to yield to the strong emotions of which we knew her impulsive nature was so susceptible. After the momentary "April shower" the old sunshine glanced back upon us, as with one of her merriest laughs she said, "It made a *baby* of me to see *you*, aunty, to think of all the past, and to know it *is* all past—will return no more forever! But sweeter than memories of pleasant hours is the will of my God!" "Yes," clasping her thin white hands together, and smiling, while her uplifted eyes beamed with joy and love unutterable, "to know that I shall so soon see Him as He is, and with the blessed saints adore Him in His glory' is worth more than all the joys a thousand worlds like this could give!" She would not let me leave her that day. Even when she must rest a little while, her hand were clasped in mine. How reluctantly I left her at its close! and how well did I forbode that I should never see her face, or listen to that dear voice again; even while I flattered myself and her, that I might be able to go to her again before her departure! It seems to me as I recall it, that the face was never so radiantly beautiful, or the voice so softly sweet, as during those hours of my last interview with her! A few weeks later Debbie wrote to St. Eustache:

"FAIRFIELD, SEPT., 1858.

"My Dear Tante S—— .. Letters from St. Eustache float like sunbeams across my path, shedding light where all seems dark around me! They are always so full of consolations and cheering with all the rest, that I love them more and more, each one that comes. Our Divine Lord always gives something to console, even when He is afflicting His children the most, and I sometimes think He has done so in my case, by sending me such friends as I have. I fear I am not thankful enough to God for those great gifts. Since I wrote you last our dear Helen has continued to fail. One week ago Father R—— gave her Holy Communion and Extreme Unction. She has been

more comfortable since. She was as calm through it as she has been through all. The day following, our good Bishop came to Fairfield to visit her. She seemed to enjoy his visit very much. He told me on leaving that he thought her 'dispositions the most remarkable he had ever known'—that he had never seen a person who had seemed, from the very first, so completely resigned to the will of God. And he is right. She has never said, 'I wish to *live*, or I wish to *die*.' She has always said it was a matter of perfect indifference to her, that she was in the hands of God, and He would do with her as He saw fit, and it would *all be right*. I have never heard her say that she wished to be released from her sufferings. The nearest approach to anything of the kind that I have heard, was a few days ago. She had suffered much for want of breath. I was sitting near her, and she finally said; 'Oh, *how long* do you think, Debbie, I shall carry about me, this *poor body*?' I replied, 'Not long I think, dear?' She looked at me, and such an expression of delight passed over her countenance as I have seldom seen, while she exclaimed, '*Won't I breathe easy*, then! and it will be a *different air* from this!' On the eve of the Assumption, I was leaving her room to go to my own, and as I went up to her bed to bid her good-night, she said to me, 'We shall wake to a glorious festival to-morrow; what if *I* should awake in a *better world*?' I asked her if she would like to. 'If it were the will of God, I would not *object*!' was her reply. It is such a consolation to see her thus! How can I ever be thankful enough to Almighty God in her behalf! A life of thanksgiving would be nothing! She has given away all her things; that is, all she valued. She has spoken of her burial and all those matters, so as to relieve me she says; she speaks of them as she would of any other occurrences which were expected to take place. Her calm exterior in parting with friends, surprises me. Her whole demeanor is calm and cheerful, not cold. If she sees a friend shed tears, she says, 'Are you not more courageous than

that?" and so she is through all. I pray God she may continue so. Father R—— brings the Holy Communion to her every week. What is gain for her, will be loss for us! Helen is a lovely girl, (if she is my sister,) and too much so for earth. I complain not that Heaven has chosen her! Anna is not yet baptized, and difficulties are abundant in the way. They seem to multiply around her."

"FAIRFIELD, SEPT. 20TH, 1858.

"My own dear L—e: I follow the bent of my feelings to-night and answer your kind letter received last evening. My Sunday duties are finished, unless it may be to say my evening prayers, and I am sure a pleasant conversation with you will not be out of place. I missed you much after you left, and have often thought your visit was quite too short. But I hope it is not the last. I wish I could know that you would not leave Vermont this winter.

"Helen is failing much more rapidly than when you were here, and, though she may live some time yet, still, Dr. Worcester says she is liable to drop away any time.

"She received the last Sacraments, that is: Extreme Unction, and Holy Communion as Viaticum, the day after you left here. Perfect resignation, and a calm, quiet joy, seems to possess her soul. She waits for death, and though willing to remain as long as God wills, still I sometimes imagine she longs to be released.

I had my likeness taken for you a few days ago in St. Albans. Persons who have seen it pronounce it very good. You must return the compliment and send me yours. Mr. and Mrs. K——s, of Cleveland, passed a day with us before they left. I liked the latter very much indeed. They invited me to pass a season with them; but before I get ready to do that, I imagine I shall be preparing for another kind of life; at least I trust I shall. The time seems so long to me ere I go. More and more, and the longer I live, the desire increases within me to consecrate myself to the service of God. Nothing

short of this can satisfy my heart. The world can not do it, or the love of earthly beings *Dieu Seul, Dieu Seul !*"

"Sister St. A—e sent her love to you in her last letter. She says, if you go to Montreal, you must not fail to go to St. Eustache to see her. 'You have been too faithful a friend to Debbie, not to have her love you,' she says."

"FAIRFIELD, SAT. MORN., OCT. 30, 1858.

"My own dear L—e: This morning I write you a far different letter than ever before. Now my trial has come, but it is a happy one. Our dear Helen is no longer of this earth. She died yesterday morning at a quarter before ten. Her departure was a glorious one, as we might have expected. Her sufferings were very great, and I stood by her until the last. Heaven has sustained me thus far. The funeral will be at eleven o'clock Monday morning; and her body will be taken to St. Albans for interment. I have not time to tell you more. Ever your own

"DEBBIE."

"ST. ALBANS, NOV. 4TH, 1858—My Dear Tante S— I have, this morning, to communicate to you the sad intelligence that our dear Helen is no more of this earth. She died last Friday morning, at a quarter before ten, and her funeral was attended at Fairfield, at eleven o'clock, on the Feast of All-Saints, (Nov 1st,) after which her remains were brought to St. Albans for interment. I am sure you will desire to know all the particulars of her death, and I will try to give them in full. On the Thursday evening previous to Thursday, the last day of her life, she commenced sinking rapidly. We called in a physician, and she asked him how much longer he thought she had to live? He told her but a short time, though probably for a day or two longer. From that moment her countenance assumed the most joyous expression I ever saw it wear, and so continued until death. She remained pretty comfortable until Tuesday night, when about three o'clock in the night, or rather Wednesday morning, we thought her going. The physician was in the

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next room.* I stepped and spoke to him, asking if he thought there was any change? After watching her breathing for a short time, he told me he thought there was. She then requested the family to be called. Father and Mother, and the other three sisters were called from their beds, and we all stood around (what we supposed) her dying couch; she was supported by pillows, and sitting up. The scene was beyond description. Father was bowed down by grief, and mother worse—but Helen! what shall I say of her? A bright smile, a look almost of delight animated her features, as she addressed each one separately. She called Laura and Charlotte, and embraced them both; then taking Anna by one hand, and father by the other, she said to the former, ‘You promise me, don’t you Annie?’ Then turning her eyes towards father, she spoke in this way: ‘Father, I am almost home; my work is almost done; would that I had lived better! But God is merciful! These children must *all* come to this hour; *they* must one day be where I am *now*, and I want them to have the same consolations that I have!’ Not one could reply. She then continued: ‘I have loved you *all*; I have disobeyed but in *one thing*! Is it right, now, father!’ He answered her: ‘Yes, my child, it is all right!’ She then bid them all good-bye, and turned to her physician: ‘Doctor, have I much longer to stay?’ His reply was that he thought not. She then began to pray and I, kneeling by her side, could occasionally catch some words from her lips though her voice was very indistinct. It was evident her *mind* was in Heaven, for twice she exclaimed, ‘Call me to Heaven! call me to Heaven! She spoke of nothing, only to ask, ‘Are

* The sisters were deeply attached to this physician, who also entertained a most affectionate regard for them. So strong was the interest they felt for his spiritual welfare, that, at their joint and earnest request, the Compiler presented his name to a pious confraternity, formed for the sole purpose of praying for the conversion of those who have manifested an interest, at any time, in our holy religion.—*Compiler*.

you near me, Debbie ?' Finally, she seemed to be disturbed by the weeping around her. 'Why do you regret? You have reason to rejoice, father!' said she. Then whispering to me, she added: 'Send them away. Debbie, they are drawing me away from Heaven!' She continued in this way until day-break Wednesday morning when, instead of dying, she *revived*; but from that time until Thursday noon, she never swallowed but *once*. Of course, her sufferings were very great, but patience was not wanting on her part. Father R— came in to see her. He asked if there was anything more he could do for her. Her reply was, 'no, Father R—, only to pray for me.' It was the last time he ever saw her. He said he thought her the happiest soul he had ever attended. She lingered along through the day and night, until Friday morning, at the early hour of half past three: then she began to sink as before. Her physician, who never left the house, came into the room, and she asked him: 'Have I much longer to stay?' He examined her pulse, and told her she had not. The family were again called, and some friends who were in the house. About this time, her vision seemed to be becoming imperfect, and she said to the Doctor, 'Is this room filled with ashes?' 'Why no, my child!' She requested to be moved near the window that she might breathe easier, and said again to the Doctor, 'Did you ever see such air?' 'Helen,' said he, 'you do not see perfectly; there is nothing in the room.' She then turned to me: 'I shall not breathe such air as this in Heaven, shall I Debbie?' Then she asked again: '*Must* I stay much longer, Doctor?' Being answered 'No,' she said, 'Good bye, all. I have said all I have to say; now stay by me, Debbie.' By this time her voice had become almost inaudible, but by being so near, I could distinguish parts of sentences. Her lips moved constantly, and the names of *Jesus* and *Mary* were repeatedly uttered. She asked me to say 'We fly to thy Patronage.' I did so, and also the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. She responded, 'Pray for us,' until I was nearly through, her voice was too faint to be

heard; but when the concluding prayer was finished, she said 'Amen!' so that every person in the room heard her plainly. She held her crucifix as long as her hands were strong enough, and times without number, pressed it lovingly to her lips. Being uncertain whether she could see or not, I held it before her a short time after she had dropped it. She fixed her eyes again upon it for a moment, and sweetly whispered, 'My crucified Lord!' These were the last words she uttered, while her mind remained clear. Soon the doctor perceived that an abscess had broken upon her lungs, and then her mind seemed to wander; until nine o'clock, she continued to speak but very little. She seemed happy all the time, but partly unconscious of her situation. At a quarter past nine she began to suffer the most terrible agony, and from that time ceased to speak, except a few times we heard *my name*. At a quarter before ten, she breathed her last. Her physician thought she had been unconscious of her sufferings for half an hour. I stood by her side until all was over. Anna and Laura were in the room, but none of the other friends. After death, her countenance was perfectly lovely. The same smile lingered on those pale lips, and every one who beheld her pronounced her 'beautiful in death.' On the days while she lay in the house, more than six hundred people came to see her. The funeral was very large. Forty-six carriages, and a great many on foot, followed her remains from Fairfield to St. Albans, eight miles, notwithstanding the unfavorable weather and very bad roads. She died as she had lived, and you know how that was. Would that my last end might be like hers! I am certain that you will not forget to pray for the repose of her soul. I am now at Mr. Hoyt's passing a few days."

"And Helen was gone! We could never have thought that she would die so young—she who was so blithe, so sparkling; so original in all sportful fancies. Helen, to apply the expressions of a much admired modern writer to her, 'with her piquant face engaging prattle, and winning ways, was made to be

a pet. Do you know this place? No, you never saw it (perhaps). But you recognize the nature of these trees, this foliage! Stones like these are not unfamiliar to you; nor are these dim garlands of everlasting flowers. Here is the place—green sod, and a white marble head-stone—Helen sleeps below! She lived through an April day; much loved was she, much loving. She often, in her brief life, shed tears; she had frequent sorrows; she smiled between, gladdening whatever saw her!”—Her spirit was attuned to the harmony of Heaven. Her practice, *entire* conformity to the will of her Maker! Long shall we miss thee, darling! *Requiescat in pace!*

CHAPTER VIII.

ON the first of December 1858, Debbie wrote the following to her friend at St. Eustache :

"Anna has been preparing for baptism and required all my leisure hours. She had the happiness of being received into the church yesterday morning, on the anniversary of my own baptism, so you perceive I have double cause for returning thanks to Almighty God. She obtained permission without difficulty, and now is within the Ark of Safety. I was her god-mother; she was baptized Anna Maria. Any one whom I have anything to do with must take the name of Mary. She will probably make her first Communion on Christmas and be confirmed about that time, as we expect the Bishop then to spend a few days in Fairfield. She seems very happy, and desires your fervent prayers for her perseverance."

Anna Barlow had at this time just entered her eighteenth year. She was not so tall as her elder sisters, but her form was very slight, and her carriage singularly easy and graceful. Her clear blue eyes sparkled with intelligence and feeling, and her complexion was so purely transparent as to reveal but too plainly, to an experienced eye, a constitutional tendency to the fatal disease which claimed its victim so much sooner than could have been anticipated, that the conviction of its presence fell like a bewildering surprise upon us all. The remarkable energy and activity of her character and habits, probably aided in concealing to a later period than is usual in such cases, the painful truth—always most unwilling-

ly admitted by fond hearts—that she was destined to an early grave. During that winter, Debbie made a visit of considerable length in Burlington. While there she wrote to her mother under date of February 1st 1859. In the course of the letter she speaks of being “troubled more or less with a pain in my side, from some cause or other. It troubled me before I left home, and has more since I came away. I hope, however, it will leave me before long.”

Some months after Helen’s death, Mr. Barlow bought a beautiful place at St. Albans, where his chief business had been located for more than a year previous, and his family began to make arrangements for their removal. In consequence of a very thorough course of repairs upon the place, and the time and attention requisite to provide and prepare the new furniture for so large a mansion, that removal did not take place, however, until past the mid-summer of 1859. The correspondence between Debbie and the young friend in Southern Vermont, (from her letters to whom I have previously given some extracts,) had been interrupted for some time by circumstances on both sides unfavorable to its continuance. It was resumed in March, 1859. I extract a part of a letter from Debbie to that friend, on the 25th of March.

“My Dear —: I was somewhat surprised to receive a letter from you a few evenings since, and equally pleased. I had thought many times that I would write to you, but waited hoping to have some intelligence from you first. I am sorry now that I did not, but you will pardon me, I am sure. Yes! our beloved Helen is no more of this earth! Her death was that of a saint. It was more happy, more glorious, than I can tell you. Her sufferings were very great for sometime before her departure. From Monday until the morning she died, which was *Friday*, I never left her side. Of the sweet peace, the almost ecstatic joy, which beamed in her countenance for that length of time, I will say but little; *words* are inadequate for the task. She could speak most of the time, and one might easily

have imagined that her soul was already experiencing a foretaste of Heaven, could they have heard all that passed from those loved lips. And what must have been going on in that heart! I know, from the expression of delight, of rapture, which occasionally overspread her face, when all was silent about, that she was holding communion with the blessed in Heaven. I cannot tell you all she said; I cannot tell you here of the patient resignation with which she received her sufferings, nor of the longing desire, the constant anxiety, with which she looked forward to the moment when she should 'sin no more!' No, I cannot tell you all now, but I hope to see you soon, and then I can and will. Suffice to say, she died on *Friday*, the day upon which she always wished to leave this weary world, full of hope, without one regret for all she left behind, without one sigh, one tear, or one look of sorrow, while others wept around her, hour after hour. She left not one stain upon her Christian character, and never, to my knowledge, did she commit one act which brought a reproach upon the holy faith she professed. She has died 'the death of the just,' and well might our wish be that ours might be like unto it. The burial was on the Feast of All Saints, one of her favorite festivals. The month of November had just commenced, as you see, and that being the month in which so much is done for the souls in purgatory, what a lovely time to die! Could she have chosen a better? And now, for myself—Helen is gone! I doubt her need of the prayers and suffrages of the faithful; still the Church commands us to pray for the departed, but pray for me dear —. Our Divine Lord has bestowed so many graces upon me, that I fear lest I prove ungrateful; He has given me sometimes a little share in His Cross, but not enough yet. There are others yet in store for me, and I regret it not. Pray that I may have courage and patience! I am very happy this winter, and why should I not be? Another, near and dear to me, has been received into our Holy Church! Our Divine Saviour gives me too many

consolations. I know you rejoice with me, and pray for the others. We are about leaving Fairfield. In May we expect to go to St. Albans to reside."

To the same: "APRIL 24TH—.... Of course you know that Lent is over. Well, our church in Fairfield had to be decorated for Easter, and I have been very much engaged preparing wreaths and flowers for the Altar. We have had services every day through Holy Week, and of course I have not had many moments to spare. Thursday night I had the happiness of spending the hours from nine until twelve before the Blessed Sacrament, something which I do every year, if possible. I thought I was going to be disappointed this time, as we feared we could not have a *Repository*, but we did, and I had that great privilege. I received Holy Communion on Holy Thursday. You were not forgotten. Easter has come, and we must rejoice, and we can do so together. The day is a very cloudy, dark one here, not such as it seems to me the feast of our Lord's Resurrection should be, but the 'Alleluias' made it seem a little more bright. I love Easter! There is something which takes all sadness from my heart, in the appearance of everything on this day. I do not wonder at the simplicity of their faith, who see the *sun dance* on Easter Sunday morning. A year ago today Helen received Communion for the last time in church, and I with her. This makes me a little sad in spite of myself, but why should I be? Her Easter this year is a far happier one, far more glorious, than earth can ever make it. She loved the glorious mysteries of our Lord's life, and through Passion time she was ever looking forward to His Resurrection, and then still forward to His Ascension."

Debbie was pleased with the choice of their future home, as the residence her father had purchased was that of her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hoyt, (who removed to Burlington to reside soon after the sale of their house,) where she and Helen had passed so many happy days together. Yet she experienced deep regrets upon leaving Fairfield, the home of her childhood.

She had many friends there to whom she was warmly attached, even among those whose affection for her and her sister had been chilled by their submission to the Catholic faith. Her spirit, always too generous to stoop to emotions of ill-will, jealousy or envy, was, when brought under the influence of that faith, too thoroughly imbued with charity and humility, to reciprocate the coldness she too often met from others, or to utter even to her most intimate friends any expressions which (if they heard them) could wound the feelings of those who so carelessly wounded her own. Beyond a gentle and kind allusion to her regret for such estrangements, she never went. Our spirited Helen, indeed, would sometimes toss her head and make some indignant or contemptuous remark, but the next moment she would take it all back, and condemn herself with severe humility for her momentary departure from charity. How loving and how sweet were the approving smiles with which her elder sister rewarded those little conquests which she thus achieved over her impetuous nature, they who have seen them much together will vividly remember, and will sympathize with the emotions which fill my eyes with tears as I record these reminiscences.

Then there was the humble church of Fairfield, within whose sacred walls many of her fondest associations were gathered. There she had often knelt with the dear departed to partake of the Bread of Angels. There they had gone together to offer their humble adorations before Jesus in His Sacrament of Love. And there, when that sister's faith was changed to sight, and her hopes closed in full fruition, she had sought daily, for many months, the consolations which could be found only in communion with her Saviour, before His Holy Altar. Its pastor had also been the director and guide of her pure soul, as well as those of her sisters on their heavenward journey, since the day of their baptism. She now felt more than ever her need of those holy counsels, which had so aided in supporting her beloved Helen through the

"valley of the shadow of death," and from which she had herself derived sustaining aid to strengthen her afflicted spirit, under the loneliness of the separation from that sister. The thought of being deprived of these, as she must be in a great measure after their removal to St. Albans, was very painful to her. Anna's health was beginning to decline, and she felt that her own also was failing. That "pain in her side," mentioned in her letter to her mother in February, was, alas! never to "leave" her, as she hoped. The final arrangements for removing were made, therefore, under circumstances so unpromising, that it required all the fortitude of spirits habituated to conformity with the will of God, to support them under the trial.

In the early part of July, Debbie again visited Montreal, for the purpose of making a spiritual retreat in her dear convent home, to decide the question as to her vocation to the life of a religious. The following letter was written during that visit to Canada :

"CONVENT OF THE CONGREGATION, N. D., }
ST. EUSTACHE, AUG. 10TH. }

"My own dear L—e: I began a letter some days since at Montreal and intended to finish it but had not time, and here I am beginning another which will only be ready, I suppose, after some days. I have been in Canada nearly six weeks. I am to return home in two or three days.

Your letter came to me here, and I am ashamed to think I have not answered it yet, but my time has been so much taken up that I could not write as I wished.

You pleased me very much by your account of the western mode of living, and I hope you will give me with another like it when you can.

In return for your description, I will give you one of my stay in Canada. A poor one, I am sure it will be, but you must let your imagination fill up the blanks.

I arrived in Montreal the 1st of July, eve of the

Festival of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to St. Elizabeth. This is the *feast patronal* of the Congregation, N. D.—the greatest day in the year for them. Their chapel was decorated beautifully, and the religious services of the day were magnificent. In the evening after Vespers I came to St. Eustache with one of the nuns. St. A—e is here. Of course I was rejoiced to see her, and she seemed to be to see me. I remained here for three weeks, and then we went to Montreal together for a visit. There I made a spiritual retreat. During five days I saw little of any one. While in retreat, you know, we give our time to prayer, fasting, spiritual reading and receiving the Sacraments. This I did at this particular time to know the Will of God concerning my future. After having consulted my own heart I feared to trust it. I knew my own desires, but I wished to know whether they proceeded from nature or from God. Therefore I consulted those whom the Church has appointed to decide such matters, and my decision is final. My health is not good. I have a cough, and am feeble. Until I am better, I must of course remain where I am."

After her return from Canada, and the removal of the family to St. Albans, the health of the two sisters declined so rapidly that it was judged best to take them to the sea-shore, to try the effect of sea-bathing. It proved beneficial to Anna, but Debbie could not breathe the air from the ocean with any comfort; it produced the most distressing cough and hoarseness, with great aggravation of the pain in her side, which hastened her return home.

Soon after she came back she visited me. I was about to go to New York, and she requested me to see the Superior of the Sisters of Mercy, (with whom I became acquainted some years before,) and ascertain the conditions of entrance into the Order and Convent. Her earnest, yet half-abashed manner when she made the request, the glowing fervor with which she assured me that her desire to consecrate her young life to God, was not a mere sentiment or

transient feeling, but the settled aim and sum of her aspirations, are before me now. It was early in October. By a higher vocation was her desire consummated on the ninth of April following, when our sweet sister "fell asleep in Jesus!"

When I was at New York, Mother Agnes was alarmingly ill, and I could not perform my errand. Before I saw Debbie again, she had been attacked with severe hemorrhage of the lungs, and when I told her of my non-fulfillment of her commission, she said serenely, "It is just as well so." She had meantime, however, obtained the desired information from another source, but knew she could never avail herself of it. While I was gone to New York she wrote to St. Eustache.

"ST. ALBANS, OCTOBER 12, 1859."—[After speaking of their excursion to the sea-shore, its effects upon them both, her own improvement after her return home, and that Anna had now returned much benefited by sea-bathing, she adds:] "I ride about constantly, as they think exercise in the open air may relieve me. I think I may get better; but probabilities are against me. I say against me—I mean my recovery. Not that I fear death as a misfortune, far from it! Though it will be a disappointment not to be able to consecrate myself, body and soul to the service of God in this life, still His will be done! 'Whether in life or in death, we are the Lord's.' It will be all the same.

"Our home is elegant—furnished by the kind solicitude of my father, with every comfort and luxury. But there is nothing in worldly advantages and delights, that can satisfy the cravings of the immortal soul."

She writes again to the same friend, *October 26th*, in cheerful submission to the decision which had now been made known to her by the hemorrhage of the lungs before alluded to, and from which she was just so far recovered as to be able to write. She speaks of it as a painful surprise to her friends, but by no means unexpected by herself; that she had

been confident for some time that her lungs were diseased, and adds: "Anna is also quite sick just now—a severe cold at first, followed by derangement of the stomach and bowels, and extreme debility. I insisted, laughingly, that she was sick to escape waiting upon me—she having been taken down the day after my sudden attack. I feel very lonely, without the privileges of attending Mass and visiting the Blessed Sacrament."

"October 29th.—A year ago to-day Helen died! The time seems so short that I can hardly realize it. . . . I have just come home from Mass which was offered for her to-day, and am seated in my room alone. I have taken my pen that my reflections may not be too sad. I shall not be long behind her, I think, and the thought is not unpleasant. If I were only like her—so well prepared, I should see no reason for regret; as it is, I have only to endeavor to put myself in readiness for that hour. Consumption gives time enough in which to prepare to die—another of God's mercies! My friends in Burlington are very kind to me."

I select the following from a fragment of the last letter to her friend L—e, with which I am furnished:

"As for myself I am getting to dislike writing, from the fact, that, on looking over my letters, I find so much of self, so much of my own aches and pains, that I am often ashamed to send them. You know an invalid's letter is usually so. One is so apt to think of self, when there is every hour some proof of disease about them: and, if they do not complain, their ails form the subject of some of their conversation. I need not say this to you, for I know you wish to hear just how I am, and would feel hurt if I did not tell you.

"You feared I was over-alarmed about myself, when I last wrote. I did think there was serious difficulty about my lungs, and I was right. The day after I wrote I had a turn of raising blood. It reduced me a good deal, and since that I have been very weak. I have had returns of the same twice.

My cough is very bad—appetite poor—and I am losing flesh. Have chills and fever, with other symptoms common in consumption.

"I am not one who can easily be deceived, and I look forward but to a short life. Shall I say with sorrow? No! it affects me little. I could wish to be better prepared; but a long life does not always bring with it perseverance in virtue; and oftentimes persons are more fit to die in the beginning of their Christian life, than after they have spent a long time in it. The will of our Divine Lord is dearer, also, to me, than anything in this poor world. I would wish to live only to consecrate myself, body and soul, to His service, and if I please Him better by suffering and dying young, it is all the same. 'In life or in death we are the Lord's.'

"I wish you were near me that I might see you sometimes. I go out still—ride every pleasant day, and visit some. I can walk but little. I have promised to visit Burlington soon, if I am able. Mr. and Mrs. Hoyt came to see me a few days since, and they made me promise I would go.

"Anna has been very sick with congestion of the lungs. She is just recovering, but is in a bad state. We are very fearful for her health.

"Now I must bring my letter to a close. I hope you will pardon the style of it. I have to write with my paper on my knee, or any way that is easiest.—Write me soon and often. Try and enjoy yourself, and look upon things in the best light possible. You know, 'every cloud has its silver lining.'"

[*To St. Eustache*]

"ST. ALBANS, NOV. 24TH. My own health continues about the same. Anna is worse than I am now. I am fearful she is not going to be any better either. We are very anxious about her, and our physician, also. She does not leave her room, and having a very delicate constitution, the disease she has had has nearly proved fatal. We now fear quick consumption. The doctors say there must be a change soon or she will not be with us long. I have almost

forgotten my own troubles in my anxiety for the poor child. She is good and patient as you ever saw any one. I am not strong enough to do for her as I did for Helen; in fact, I am but just able to wait on myself. My heart, however, is very light: sickness does not make me sad. I should pity myself if it did! She was prevented from finishing this letter for some days, and then adds:

"Anna continues about the same. My Uncle Pierce* is now here. He thinks her case appears almost hopeless. So continue our trials; I shall probably live to see her die also. 'Only going a little before,' as our beloved Helen said, a few days before her death. The real *pain* of sickness consists in our privations in Holy things. No Mass! Communion but seldom. No visits to the Blessed Sacrament." About this time Mr. Hoyt's two oldest daughters came to St. Albans for a visit of a few days, a portion of which they passed in their former home with Debbie's younger sisters. She expected to accompany them when they returned to Burlington. Anna became suddenly worse and she could not go. She wrote by them to Mrs. Hoyt.

"St ALBANS, NOV. 30TH, 1859—My Dear Mrs. Hoyt—A—and M—are leaving for home to-day, and I intended, when they came, to have gone with them; but it has been ordered otherwise. Probably you heard from Mrs. Hunt of Anna's low condition. Since Sunday she has seemed to fail rapidly, and we have now little or no grounds for hoping she will ever be any better. Her symptoms are all bad—not one in her favor. Her limbs are badly swollen, and, in fact her body seems to be most of the time. Monday afternoon we thought it safest and best for her to receive the last sacraments, as Father C—— was leaving for his missions, and would be absent until Saturday. We had been told by her physicians that, should we see certain symptoms, we might be alarmed and look far a speedy termination of all her troubles. They

* A Physician.

appeared, for the first time, Monday morning. I suppose, if there is no change, she can last but a short time. She is perfectly conscious of her situation, and as cheerful as ever our dear Helen was; though she did not expect so soon to be called. When I told her the opinion which had been expressed with regard to her, the intelligence was received without a sign of emotion. She answered me thus: 'I did not expect it so soon; but it is all the same.' It is rather sudden to us all, though her health has been poor for a good while.

"It seems to our father and mother that they are losing their family as soon as the Catholic Church receives them, and the former often expresses himself to that effect. He cannot see these afflictions in any other light. Anna had miserable health long ago. Four years to-day, you may remember, I do not forget it certainly. I have reason to be cheerful this morning even in a sad house. It is the anniversary of my baptism, and Anna's too. It is just a year since she was received into the Church. We are neither of us too down-hearted to-day, I assure you, though somewhat disappointed in our plans. We had intended to spend the feast rather differently. Do not forget to pray for us. I would like to see you so much. A——will tell you all. We were delighted to see the girls, and hope they have enjoyed themselves. They have been here but little—I wish they had been more, for it seemed such a pleasure to Anna. She is able to see all her friends."

"Her next letter to her beloved friend at St. Eustache was written with a pencil. She was unable to hold a pen.

"ST. ALBANS, JAN. 4TH, 1860—WEDNESDAY MORNING. You think strange, I am sure, that I have been so long without writing to you; but I have not been able, and am not now. I was very weak when I received your last letter, and in a few days I went to Burlington. I remained three weeks at Mr. Hoyt's. I received every care and attention that could be given to any one, but continued to fail

every day. I came home last week, and am now so feeble as hardly to leave my room at all. I have been trying every day to write you a few lines with a pencil, but could not; my strength was not sufficient. I will not write long to-day. As I am writing of myself, I will tell you just how I am, and it may make the burden of my letter. I do not suffer much from acute pain, but a great deal from impeded breath, severe coughing, and extreme weakness. They say my face does not change much; but my *voice* you would not know. I can hardly speak above a whisper. You see I am really wearing away, slowly, perhaps, but surely. I know your next question will be: 'And how do you feel about it?' I enjoy myself well, my dear Tante St. A, and sometimes I think I am happier than ever before. Of course, the thoughts of death bring with them many, very many serious reflections, but my hope is still alive. I have the sacraments within my reach and all that the Church can give me, and what more can I ask? Though sometimes I wish for other things, I have no reason to complain. Anna is in a room not far from me, and she, I think, is gradually losing her hold upon life. She seems drooping like a flower, without any apparent suffering, and she says she hardly knows what is causing her to fail. We enjoy ourselves, I can assure you, the little time they leave us together. She is in the best of spirits all the time and has been through all her illness. She says she has been praying for six months for resignation to bear my departure, but now she thinks the prospect is that she shall die first. It is hard to tell.

"I saw Sister C—— almost every day while I was in Burlington, and expect to see her here on Friday. I was able to go to the convent but twice, and when I did, it was so hard to leave that I had better not have gone.

"*Wednesday Evening.*—I add a few lines this evening. Since writing the above, Father R— has made us quite a long call. It is my twenty-second birthday. I shall hardly see another. You must pray

hard for me, and request the nuns to do the same." Again she writes to the same person :

"JAN. 19TH, 1860. I am thankful I can still write you myself, instead of having some one else to do it for me. You will excuse its being written with a pencil, I know, and be glad, with me, that the letter is my own writing. Your letter, with its kind messages and words of love, has been received and read with the greatest pleasure. Continue, I beg of you, to pray for my perseverance, and in asking for myself, of course I include Anna. We continue about the same as when I wrote you last, some days worse, and others again quite comfortable. Anna, I think will not last long; her strength fails rapidly. I never saw any one in better spirits. I spent an hour in her room last evening, and she told me how fast her strength was going, and how short a time she thought she would live, with such a cheerful countenance, that I thought to myself, it was no matter how soon she died. I do not see so much of Anna as I could wish, for several reasons. One is, I cannot bear the high temperature at which her room has to be kept, and another, the Doctors say there is too much sympathy between us to make it as well for us to be together; these, with other reasons, keep us a good deal separate.

" You speak, my dear Tante, in your letter, of the benefit of sufferings when united with those of our Divine Lord. Truly this is one of my greatest consolations, to know that not one pain or one sigh is lost or forgotten! You know our Divine Saviour always appeared more lovely to me in His Passion than elsewhere, and it would be strange now if I were not willing to suffer what He sends me through His love. It is sometimes hard. One is almost tempted to wish the pain and anguish away, but again, I find it all pleasant and easy. Last night I was awake nearly the whole night with my cough and fever; but I enjoyed as I would enjoy rest. Those nights I often have, are the times when I look over the *past*, examine the *PRESENT*, and look forward to the *future*!

In thinking of the past the mercies of God formed a great part of my thoughts last evening, and to-day the same thought is uppermost in my mind. I do not know that I have ever realized so fully as now, how great and how numerous those mercies have been! If I do not find that they have been too dreadfully misused and abused, this is all I fear; but again, *'His mercy endureth forever!'*

"We received Holy communion together yesterday morning, Anna and myself. I never expect to go out again; I thought I should for a while but the doctor tells me he does not think I will live through the spring months. Tell Sister J—— that I shall hardly see her in May as I promised, if I were well, but that I hope and pray that the Month devoted to our sweet Mother will not pass without seeing her consecrated to her service forever. She must pray for me. Tell her to ask the Blessed Virgin to obtain for me all the graces I so much need now. Tell ma Tante, Sr. B——, that the picture she shall surely have. I have loved it much for itself, and much for the giver's sake, and would rather she should have it than another. As for you, my dearest Tante, I do not know what to send you. Can you not mention something you would like yourself? I am not particularly attached to anything I have that I know of. My crucifix, my books, my rosaries, are all I have that you would value. Any of them I will send you. Now my dear St. A——, I must close this letter; may be it is the last I shall ever write to you, perhaps not; but if it *should* be, remember that the *heart* grows *warmer* and *fonder* as life *wanes* and *wears* away; that if ever I have felt a deep affection for you and for all at the Congregation, it is *now*, and I will cherish it always. Pray for me."

It was indeed the last letter she ever wrote to that dearly beloved friend. Six days later she addressed a little note to the young friend and correspondent in the South part of the State, to whom she had not written for some months. It was her last effort of the kind, and the faltering, unequal characters in her

handwriting. (usually as correct, distinct and beautiful in its execution under all circumstances, as any I have ever seen,) give evidence of the difficulty with which it was performed.

"ST. ALBANS. JAN. 25TH, 1858.

"Dear — : You may be surprised to receive a letter from me, but I felt that on the strength of our former correspondence, I ought to let you know some facts which may surprise you very much, unless you have already heard through some other source. Our dear Anna is just going with quick consumption. We look for her death at any time. She is confined to her bed, and has been to her room, for three months. She is showing in her last days, what the Catholic religion can do, in preparing a soul for what awaits us all. I cannot add good news even here for myself. You may be more surprised when I tell you, that *I* too am confined to my room with the same disease, only that it seems to make slower progress than Anna's has. My cough has been bad since last May, and in October I had an attack of spitting blood, and another in November. I have not been down stairs since New Year's day. It is very hard for me to write, so you must excuse the style, and the short letter. I thought you would like to hear and I have managed to scribble a few lines. I am in the best of spirits, and am only waiting until our dear Lord comes to take me away. Pray for us! My love to your sisters. Anna sends much love. Your true friend, DEBBIE."

Though Debbie did not sink very rapidly, yet were her sufferings much more severe than is usual in consumption. She had, during the remainder of her life, frequent paroxysms of agonizing distress.

The same week that the foregoing letter was written, I saw the sisters together for the last time. Upon entering Anna's room I expressed my agreeable surprise to find them both there! Debbie said she was there by special invitation. "Yes," said Anna, I announced to her yesterday, that if she would be very good she should dine with me to-day; so this

morning I sent my compliments, requesting the pleasure of her company at my house to dinner." Just at that moment their mother came in with a servant carrying the salver upon which was their dinner. Drawing the table to the side of Anna's bed, Debbie was drawn in her chair to it, while her mother arranged the covers upon it, and the delicacies which she had prepared with her own hands, hoping to tempt their appetites. The whole scene in that sick room, it may be readily imagined, was most affecting, but nothing went to my heart like the tender earnestness with which their mother urged them to partake of what she had taken so much pains to cook and season, as they "used to like it;" and the expression of disappointed sadness, with which she watched their ineffectual efforts to gratify her by complying with her request. Anna inquired with affectionate interest after all her young friends whom I knew, and added, "Tell Mary" (who was absent at school), "that she must write me one of her own cheerful funny letters, such as she always has:" (they had been correspondents for some time, and the artless originality of Anna's letters had furnished us with much amusement,) "she need not feel as if she must be gloomy and sad because I am soon going away!" "She does not feel so on your account, by any means, my child," I replied: "her grief, like that of all your friends, is selfish. We think of what we are to lose, more than of what you will gain!" She spoke with earnest simplicity of her feeling as death was approaching; of the pleasure she anticipated on meeting her beloved sister, and seemed to have an impression that Helen would be permitted to conduct her soul as it left this world, and to unfold before it the mysteries of another, as she and Debbie had instructed her here, in those of the Kingdom of Christ upon earth.

"The sufferings of her last sickness were not very severe, except from daily increasing faintness and difficulty of breathing, when she was placed in any position that would seem to be easy. This increased to such a degree that for many days before her depart-

ure, it was impossible for her to breathe with any support whatever around her. She could not even permit a hand to be applied to uphold her weary head, but sat perfectly erect, unsupported by pillows or other appliances, until exhausted nature yielded. The only utterance like a complaint that ever passed her lips was the faint expression, 'I am *so* tired!' and then she would smile sweetly, and reprove in herself, what she called her 'impatience.'

"On Friday afternoon previous to her death, Debbie was carried into her room for the last time. Their first eager questions of each other were to ascertain their mutual feelings, now that death was so near at hand. Having conversed together more than an hour, and assured themselves that all was peace in that respect, Debbie proposed that they should recite their beads together once again, which they did, with such a degree of fervor as befitted the time and the circumstances, and with the serenity and recollection of spirits lingering upon the confines of time, perfectly prepared to pass them, at any moment, into eternity. It was one of the most impressive scenes that was ever presented in a chamber of death, and overpowering, in its beautiful pathos, to all who witnessed it.—At the close of the holy exercise, they smilingly and lovingly kissed, and parted. As the affectionate 'Good bye!' was exchanged, Debbie remarked, 'We shall meet again so soon, dearest, that we shall hardly know we have been separated at all!' and was carried back to her room. A cheerful, tearless parting between two angelic spirits, the tearful sighs of poor humanity floating unnoticed around them the while! From Saturday morning, the tenth of March, at nine o'clock, when a change took place which she supposed was the final one, until she ceased to breathe, twenty-four hours later, an expression of glowing rapture settled upon Anna's face, which never left it, and was the most perfect illustration of the idea conveyed in the term '*Seraphic*,' of anything I ever beheld. The last change, when it really came, was but momentary, but perfectly understood by her. Cast-

ing a parting look of smiling love for a moment, upon each person in the room, she bowed her head, and was gone ! Not the slightest struggle, not even the quiver of a muscle, betrayed the moment when that pure spirit took its flight !

"And Anna was with Helen ! How we longed to look 'beyond the veil,' and witness that meeting ! It seemed as if Debbie did see it, for her spirit was too absorbed in its joys to be shaded by one regret.— Though Anna's plans for this world were so arranged as to open every prospect of happiness to her future, which her young heart could desire, yet she accepted the call to another in the same spirit of joyous resignation with which her sisters received it ; the only cloud that obscured its brightness for a moment being the thought that the destiny of another would be overshadowed by her early departure.

"The funeral services were performed by the Pastor of St. Albans. Our Right Rev. Bishop went the day before to that place, intending to officiate upon the occasion, but he was taken very ill the previous night, and was consequently unable to fulfill that intention."

CHAPTER IX.

THE last weeks of Debbie's life were attended by severe and constantly increasing suffering. She could not lie down at all, or even recline in her chair. Her head was bowed down, (as if to assimilate her entirely to her Divine Master in every circumstance of His Passion and Death, which had so long formed the dearest theme of all her meditations and devotions,) and drawn by contraction of the muscles towards the left side, until her face could be seen only by kneeling very low at her right side, and looking up into it! Her voice was so entirely gone that her words were uttered in a faint whisper. But those "Angel whisperings," will they ever be forgotten by those who listened to them? Early in Holy week it was thought that she was dying. At her request the fact was communicated to her beloved Tante, St. A—, now at Montreal. Many messages of love went with it, from her to that "best friend who," to use her own language, "loved my soul because Jesus Christ died to save it; who cared for it, prayed for it, before I had learned to care for it myself or appreciate its value." She also sent loving messages to the whole community, requesting their prayers for the soul of their departing child, and expressing the joy it would have given her to see her dear Tante once again. The Mother Superior immediately telegraphed to know if it would be any comfort to her to have St. A—— come to her? A reply in the affirmative was despatched, and in less than an hour after its receipt, that Sister, accompanied by another, was on her way to St. Albans, to attend the last hours of her

darling child ; a blessing as unexpected by Debbie as it was unprecedented, none of the Order having ever left the Convent before upon such an errand, their vocation being simply to teach. Debbie could not express her gratitude for the favor. It was an unspeakable comfort to her to see her dear Tante, who was entirely overcome to find her child thus, suffering so much more than she had expected ! She knelt by her side and wept bitterly, while, in faint whispers, such expressions as these were breathed into her ear : " Is it possible my own eyes see once again in this world, my sweet Tante St. A——, **mon ange, mon oiseau gris ?*" (a name she had given her, in the happy days at St. Eustache, because her complexion was slightly *freckled*,) and many other terms of endearment, which I cannot now recall, by which it had been her custom to address her beloved friend.

The Sisters had permission to stay two days, at the close of which, on Good Friday morning, they reluctantly left her, under the strong impression that she would not live through that day.

Soon after they left, a singular change, unusual in consumption, took place. Dropsical symptoms supervened (at the period when under ordinary circumstances dissolution would have closed her sufferings), attended, of course, with distressing swelling of the limbs and body, and causing a partial diversion of the disease from the lungs, which arrested its progress there, without relieving the suffocating pressure upon them. She lingered thus, in those fearful pangs which usually belong only to the last hour, until her departure on the morning of Easter Monday, April ninth, at seven o'clock. I was so favored as to be with her from the afternoon of Good Friday, until her dear form was prepared for its last resting place. Though her mind wavered slightly at intervals, yet she was at any time (save in one instance to be mentioned hereafter) easily drawn to understand clearly to the very last, every circumstance of her own situa-

* My Angel! my Gray-bird!

tion and of every thing around her. She frequently desired me to read the prayers for the departing, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, portions of psalms, and such other devotions from time to time, as her strength would permit her to join in—which she did in the midst of her agonies, with the most edifying fervor. Not the least interesting part of a scene which, though harrowing as to its anguish, was still glorious in its triumphs, was the course her pure thoughts took, even in their wanderings. She was ever in some holy place, before the altars she loved so well, pouring forth her fervent prayers; or in the company of the Reverend Clergy, or pious nuns, offering them fruits and refreshments; sometimes she was busy in preparing clothing for the poor, ministering to their wants, and expressing the deepest love for them and sympathy in their sufferings. Her perfect conformity to the will of God remained serenely firm to her last breath, and she repeatedly called upon us to pray, not that she might have one pain less, nor for the slightest diminution of her anguish, but, “*O, for a great deal more patience!*” We could not conceive how more could be added to a patience already so perfect! She was constantly kissing the crucifix, and breathing utterances of devoted love for her dying Redeemer; calling upon us all to love Him for her, and to draw the love of all hearts to Him, to compensate for the imperfections of her love. She also told us again and again, to be sure not to speak of her, when she was gone, as a glorified saint, or as rejoicing with the Just, “for,” said she, “when you speak of me in that way, it is because you do not know my faults, my *exceeding sinfulness*, and if you allow yourselves to do it, you will forget to *pray for me!* I want to entreat you to remember, that I shall need your *prayers*, and that if I am so happy as to gain a place in purgatory, it is all I can expect!” She often said, “Now I know what a blessed thing it is to die a Catholic! I never before realized it as I do now! O, why was *I* so favored as to be made a child of the Church, when so many who seem so

much more worthy, are left to perish outside of the One Fold whose Shepherd is our Great Redeemer!"

It would fill pages, were I to record the sweet expressions of gratitude, piety, and resignation, which were constantly falling from her lips, and all with such childlike simplicity and entire absence, most evidently, of any motive save the glory of God, that no one could hear them unmoved. Her physician (whose attendance was most devoted and kind), though differing from her in religion, was often deeply affected by the beauty of her character, and the spirit in which she endured her almost unprecedented sufferings.

On the morning of Easter Sunday, before the gas-lights were extinguished in her room, and when the first rays of light began to appear, though they were still so faint that no one in the room had noticed them (her chair being so placed that she faced the East), she whispered to me, "It is the dawn of the day on the morning of the Resurrection!" then smiling sweetly she added, "The women were very early at the Sepulchre, but the men were not there, and the women were the *first* to believe in His Resurrection!" At seven o'clock that morning we thought she was going, the family were called in, and she took an affectionate leave of each one. She then requested me to say "We fly to thy patronage," etc., and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, which I did, feeling that it was the last time that her pure spirit would be united with ours in pious supplications this side of eternity. She joined with great fervor; and although we united in prayers for her several times after that, when she was conscious that we were doing so, she was too much exhausted to join us outwardly. She hoped to depart on Easter Sunday, and we had repeatedly assured her that we thought she would be permitted to, but the hours passed on, and she was still lingering in the very embrace of death. Late in the evening she looked at me, while such a mournful shade flitted over her dear features as I can never forget, and sobbed in shuddering agony rather than

uttered in words, "It seems as if our dear Lord *loves* to see me suffer with Him!" and at the same moment the shade vanished, and a rapturous smile glowed upon her countenance, as she kissed the crucifix, ever in her hand, and breathed, "Blessed forever be His holy will!" I exhorted her to offer every pain she endured, in union with the sufferings of her Redeemer, to procure the conversion of those for whom she, and her sweet sisters, had been praying so long. She replied eagerly, "I do all the time; I am offering them, and I am willing to suffer *everything*, if I can only gain that treasure for them!"

Her mother had remained with unflinching fortitude and constancy by her side through all those weary days! By night and by day had her gentle ministrations been exercised with untiring firmness, and while the cheerful patience, the resignation, and piety of her daughter, were matters of wonder to her, as to all who witnessed them, the calm endurance of that mother, under all the crushing sorrows of the scene, was a still greater surprise to me. I expressed it to her, and she said, "My daughters have *prepared* me for it; they have fortified me by their counsels, and have obtained support for me by their prayers!" adding, that she was surprised at herself, when she thought how impossible it would once have been for her, even to have contemplated without entire dismay, the scenes through which she was now passing so calmly. Debbie could not bear to have her out of her sight; though she was fearful lest her health might suffer from such constant attendance, yet her presence was a comfort she needed so much, that she could not bring herself to dispense with it. The last night, however, she noticed that her mother was much exhausted, and insisted that she should go to her own room and take some rest, quieting her fears about leaving her, with tender assurances that she should be very comfortable, and would send for her if she was not. She then made her own arrangements as to the attendants who should remain in her room, two tender and faithful Catholic nurses, one of

whom had been with the sisters through the winter, and the other for some weeks; while her father and myself remained just outside the door of her apartment, to be ready at any moment if needed. She made every effort to be quiet and contented, but exhausted nature wavered when the arm of the mother was withdrawn, and her mind became for the first time so completely bewildered that we could not soothe or pacify her. The presence of her mother again seemed to compose her at once. Those who were present will each remember, I am sure, to their dying day, the expression of her countenance when her mother reappeared, and the loving epithets with which she addressed her! I never saw any manifestations more touching and affectionate than those she constantly showed for her parents. She had often assured me when she was in health, that the only real and bitter trial of her life as a Catholic, had been, that her convictions of duty required her so to act as to give her parents pain.

About twenty minutes before she ceased to breathe, she desired to be laid on the bed quickly, which was done. Just after she was there she was wrung with a sharp agony, and the crucifix slipped from her hand, at the same time that we thought she had breathed her last, but the next moment she gasped for breath, and threw out her right hand as if seeking for something. The Crucifix was placed in it, and her last effort was to clasp it to her heart, and I heard her utter the names, Jesus! Mary! Joseph! with that last breath which followed the effort. There were six Catholics kneeling at the foot of her bed, and praying for her. For some minutes after she ceased to breathe, the silence was so deep in that apartment of death, that we dared not disturb it even with our sobbings—the indulgence of even the most sacred emotions of poor humanity seemed to us like irreverence in such a presence. At length the heart-stricken mother said gently and calmly, with uplifted eyes, “*Another treasure gone before!*” Her last words to me were, ‘Mother, you *must* be submissive!’ and

I will *try* to be; but how *can* I live without my *daughters* !”

For the rest of us, we felt that we had accompanied a youthful saint to the Gates of Paradise, and that glimpses of that “promised land” had been revealed to us through the opened portals, as she passed them to her rest! May we ever remember those glimpses! Four weeks and one day after Anna’s departure, Debbie also withdrew to join the two sisters whose souls she had first led to consider the things which pertained to their salvation and peace, and the three now sleep side by side in the village cemetery.

Requiem æternam dona eis Domine!
Et lux perpetua luceat eis!

The Bishop of Burlington performed the funeral services at the church, and delivered a most affecting and appropriate discourse, embodying many of the details which I have endeavored, though with imperfect success, to record.

The Pastor of Fairfield officiated at the grave, and consigned the mortal remains of his spiritual child, “Ashes unto ashes, dust unto dust!” in the hope of a glorious resurrection. To him I am much indebted for encouragement and aid in the prosecution of my task: speaking of which, in a letter to me, he says: “I need not assure you that it gave me the greatest satisfaction to know that you were writing a sketch of the edifying lives of my children (I love to call them such), for I was their confidential friend, besides being their confessor and guide, according to the little light which it has pleased God to give me.

.... The dates of their baptism I suppose you have. For the rest, I do not think the task will be a hard one to write their lives, with the assistance conveyed through the spirit which pervades their simple and sincere writings; the last one especially. Do not fear to say that her heart was the very sanctuary of purity and innocence! Above all, write my testimony as to her love for our Divine Lord in His adorable Sacrament. There was scarcely a day that

she did not spend an hour in our lowly church, all alone, save the presence of the Saviour she loved so much, and the blessed Angels who continually minister unto Him in His holy sanctuary. And the edification with which her presence inspired our young people, especially in her reception of the sacraments, will, I trust, never be forgotten. So full of faith, of recollection, was my poor child. I know her fervent prayers will be offered to our Divine Lord and His Blessed Mother, for your good intentions in writing those pious reflections upon her life, for I am certain it will be a source of much good for our young people. Not that poor Debbie dreamed that her virtues should thus be recorded. No! for her it is sufficient that they are recorded by her loved Saviour Himself in the Book of Eternal Life. Besides her love to the Blessed Sacrament her next pre-eminent virtue was charity towards others. I have never known her guilty, *even once*, of injuring in the least the character of another. Do not think I exaggerate. Who should know those sisters if I did not, who was their director and correspondent ever since their baptism. May God bless your work, and may it be the fruitful means of leading many another pure soul to Heaven!"

When Debbie's dear friend "Carrie" entrusted me with the letters from which I have given copious extracts, she wrote one to me, from which I quote the following passages:

"I am delighted that you intend to publish a second edition of the "Young Converts," as the book is in great demand, and it is impossible to procure a copy. I very much regret that, at Debbie's earnest request, I destroyed many of her most beautiful letters. It would seem that her pen was guided by an Angel-hand. I send you those I preserved, and need not tell you how highly I prize the precious relics. Some of them are worn and soiled, but the sentiments traced by Debbie's hand are legible, and therefore more than precious. I can never be sufficiently grateful to our Heavenly Father for the blessing He conferred in giving me Debbie as an intimate friend.—

We stood together by her death-bed, dear Mrs. S—, and was there ever a scene more beautiful? I regarded it only as the transfer of an angel to her heavenly home!"

Debbie's beloved "Tante," St. A——, also writes to me, "I forget if I told you what our sweet Debbie said the day she gave me a *Souvenir*. 'My own Tante St. A——, you have the first choice of everything I have; you have been my best friend. Yes, indeed, so if there is anything that belongs to me which can please you, be sure you shall have it!' I answered I did not care for any thing in particular, but I would cherish any thing she liked the most. She smiled and said, 'Ma Tante, you should know that I am not attached to anything on earth; but what I value most is my 'Following of Christ,' for that dear little book has been a source of great consolation to me in my little trials. I know you would like to have a cross that belonged to your child; well, the one I value most is this,' giving me the cross you saw; 'now ma Tante, if these things please you, you must take them, and any thing else you would like to have.' I told her I was satisfied with these souvenirs. I relate this, that you may know how far she carried her detachment of all earthly affections; this virtue is admirable in one so young.

"The dear child! I have the picture of her virtues constantly before my mind. You know she never had a secret from me: her heart was opened to me as a book, in which I could read all her life and character. I can truly say she was the most perfect young girl I ever knew; and all her teachers here are of the same opinion. Therefore, you need not fear to say too much in praise of my sweet child."

My task is almost done! I sincerely wish it better done! I have lingered lovingly over it—

"With only such degree of sadness left,
As might support longings of pure desire;
And strengthen love rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave."

I have felt, while dwelling upon the singular history of these our precious sisters in the Faith, that it was indeed "good for me" to be so occupied! I have realized the truth uttered by the wisest of men, that it is "*better* to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting." I trust I shall carry with me through the grave, and into Eternity, the treasures I have gathered in the prosecution of this work. May the perusal of these simple Memoirs produce a corresponding effect upon the minds of my young friends. Should any one among them, when sinking under opposition and contempt, or when tempted by ridicule to be ashamed of their religion, and its practices, be encouraged by the examples here recorded, to return to their first allegiance, and be awakened to renewed zeal and firmness in the confession of the holy Catholic faith in the midst of its enemies, I should feel my humble efforts amply rewarded. It has indeed been a labor of *love*, as well as of blessed obedience, for me, and watered with abundant tears! Truly happy shall I be, if I have been enabled so to perform the behest of our beloved and respected Bishop, as to claim the promise, that "they who sow in tears shall reap in joy;" and, "returning joyfully, bring my sheaves with me" to the Altars of the Lord of Hosts, in the abundant fruits produced by it among our young people, to the honor and glory of His Holy Name!